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THE CHRISTIAN DUTY OF GRANTING THE CLAIMS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICS.

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THE CHRISTIAN DUTY

OF

GRANTING THE CLAIMS

OF

THE ROMAN CATHOLICS.

WITH

A POSTSCRIPT

IN ANSWER TO

THE LETTERS OF THE REV. G. S. FABER,

PRINTED IN THE ST. JAMES'S CHRONICLE.

BY THOMAS ARNOLD, D.D.

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AND LATE FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

OXFORD,

PRINTED BY W. BAXTER,

FOR J. PARKER; AND C. AND J. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD,

AND WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON.

1829.

776.



PREFACE.

IN venturing to offer the following pages particularly to the notice of the clergy, my main object has been to correct this prevalent impression, that it may be wrong in a religious point of view to grant the Catholic claims, but it cannot be more than inexpedient to reject them. I have therefore argued the Question on the grounds of right: although I allow, that in the ordinary discussion of it, the topic of right is one which it is on many accounts better to wave; and where the opponents of the Catholics do not make conscience their plea for resisting the

THE political merits of the Catholic Question have been too often and too ably discussed, and the political authorities in favour of what is called Emancipation are too overwhelming, to render it necessary at this late period to state the grounds of national expediency on which that great measure may be defended. But the most respectable opponents of the Catholics, including, I believe, a large proportion of the Clergy of the Church of England, consider the Question in a higher light; they think that it involves more than political interests; that to admit Catholics to become Members of the Legislature would be most injurious to the cause of the Protestant Religion; and that therefore no views of worldly policy should induce a good man to compromise the service of God, and in effect to sacrifice his highest duty for the sake of obtaining a temporal advantage.

This is at once to put the Question on its true grounds: for as parties and public bodies are made

up of individuals morally and religiously responsible; and as no individual Christian, who values his salvation, can knowingly prefer any temporal benefits however great to the strict line of his Christian duty; it is manifest that Parliament ought to reject the Catholic claims, even with the certainty of thereby provoking a civil war; if it be indeed a sin against God to grant them. I am therefore not only willing to consider the Question as one of duty rather than of expediency, but it is my earnest wish to do so. These are the principles on which it becomes a Christian to argue; and woe to him who for party, or even for national considerations, allows himself to lower the high standard of Christian perfection; to value civil privileges and political freedom beyond a single and unwavering devotion to the will of God.

It will be my endeavour then in the following pages to prove,

First, that it is the direct duty of every Englishman to support the claims of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, even at the hazard of injuring the Pro-

testant Establishment; because those claims cannot be rejected without great injustice; and it is a want of faith in God and an unholy zeal to think that he can be served by injustice, or to guard against contingent evil by committing certain sin.

Secondly, that as the path of duty is the path of wisdom, so the granting of the Catholic claims, to which we are bound as a plain point of duty, will in all human probability greatly benefit the cause of Christianity; that it will tend to purify the Catholic Religion in Ireland from its greatest superstitions, and gradually to assimilate it more and more to Protestantism.

The principle of the first assertion, when addressing myself to conscientious Christians, I need not waste time in proving. No good man in our days would defend the practice of pious frauds, or of supporting the interests of his Church by persecution. If then the exclusion of the Catholics of Ireland from their civil rights be an act of injustice, or in other words if it be a sin when know-

ingly committed, it is not a lawful means of advancing or defending the Protestant Religion.

Now in order to shew that this exclusion is unjust, it will be necessary to ascend to higher principles than those to which its advocates generally appeal; and to shew that these higher principles can alone in fact determine the merits of the Question. And it is here that good men are blinded, as we shall see hereafter, by an original error in their political opinions; which being in its very essence destructive of our notions of justice, distorts the view of every political question, and makes those who entertain it mistake habitually wrong for right and right for wrong.

Nothing has ever been more pernicious to the growth of human virtue and happiness than the habit of looking backwards rather than forwards for our model of excellence. The individual who should compare his life with what he himself was in his earlier years, instead of contrasting it with that high Christian standard which he never yet has

reached, but which it should be his daily prayer and labour to reach hereafter, would assuredly go back rather than improve in goodness and wisdom. And so on a larger scale is the improvement of civil society obstructed, by referring to its actual origin and past fortunes, rather than contemplating that hitherto unattained excellence, to which, if it rightly used its increasing experience, it should be approaching in every generation successively nearer. We might as well build our ships after the model of our forefathers' coracles, as endeavour to find the principles of wisdom and justice developed in our forefathers' government. Necessity or chance led to the first rude attempts at navigation: force and cunning were the predominant elements in the constitution of the earliest civil societies. The supremacy of strength and intellect over weakness and ignorance is no doubt sufficiently natural: so is selfishness natural; and nothing could be more in accordance with our unimproved nature, than that the strong and the wise should possess a pre-eminence and abuse it. Governments then being established some on the base of mere physical force, some on priestcraft, and others on a mixture of both these

elements, the language of the laws which were framed by the governing powers was naturally adapted to the principles and interests of the framers. And as these principles were very different from those of justice and true wisdom, so the written or municipal law was also very different from that unwritten and universal law, whose "seat is in the bosom of God, whose voice is the harmony of the world."

But the dictates of this divine law were never wholly unknown to men; and their excellence is such, that those who hated them most were often ashamed openly to dispute them. Those who suffered under the yoke of a tyranny grounded upon force or superstition, appealed to justice as the most powerful advocate of the weak against the strong: they gave currency to her language, and asserted her principles; and even when success had corrupted them, and made them inclined themselves to forget her, yet the good which they had done continued to exist in spite of them: the truths by which they had profited remained to instruct others also; the wisdom of which they had opened

the spring for their own necessities, flowed forth with a perpetual stream to refresh far distant lands. Meanwhile the language of municipal law underwent a very partial improvement. It ceased to press upon that part of the community who had succeeded in releasing themselves from bondage; and sometimes those who had obtained a participation in political power introduced into its enactments some of those just principles to which they had been indebted for their own deliverance. But the selfish fear, that from henceforth they had more to lose than to gain from the general ascendancy of truth and justice, disposed them to limit the application of those principles to their own particular case; and to shrink from substituting them broadly and universally for the language of the older constitution of things.

The repetition of this process in successive generations brings us to a state of things, in which most classes of the community have secured to themselves all the rights which equal justice could require; in which all have gained the simplest and most necessary of these rights; in which the

great principles of the eternal law are most widely known, and upheld by the unanimous voice of the wise and good; but in which the municipal or written law of the land has not yet learnt to avow those principles, but still retains amidst great partial improvements much of the narrow and iniquitous spirit of its earliest origin. It was at first a mere system of exclusion: and so far from being the standard in great questions of national right, every victory gained by public right has necessarily led to the improvement of the law, and could have only been rendered legal by the law's alteration. Nay, as those very alterations from various causes have generally expressed the particular application of principles, rather than the principles themselves, and as their particular application may greatly vary with times and circumstances, so it may sometimes happen, that laws promulgated in one age to further the cause of liberty and justice, may in another have the very opposite tendency, and must be repealed in the letter if we wish to fulfil their spirit.

What I meant then by the original error of the

political creed of many good men, is the principle that in all questions of political alteration the presumption is against change. Now on the contrary the presumption is always in favour of change, because the origin of our existing societies was an unjust and ignorant system; because where that system has not been altered, it must require to be so; and even where it has, as the alteration was often of a temporary and particular nature, a fresh improvement will be generally desirable, if we wish to secure the substantial principle of justice and wisdom.

A similar fallacy is involved in another argument, commonly used by the enemies of improvement, that the constitution must not be tampered with. Now this is a plea of considerable weight wherever the existing order of things is the result of one comprehensive plan; wherever the claims of the different elements of the social body have been impartially weighed, and each has received that exact proportion of power and consequence which a sound view of the general good would assign to it. Under such circumstances partial alterations may

mar the symmetry of the whole; and a general change is not likely to be needed. But where the existing constitution is the mere result of various partial and independent reforms, each of which redressed one particular grievance, while incongruities in the rest of the body politic were suffered to continue unheeded; it is worse than idle to speak of it as one uniform system, digested by comprehensive wisdom; and to deprecate the repetition of those particular reforms to which all its excellence is owing, and which may by easy gradations bring it at last to a practical perfection, without the necessity of a complete revolution.

These remarks apply to the history of almost all nations; except those which have received an entire constitution at one particular time, founded on comprehensive views of the rights and interests of all orders of men in the country, and providing justly and wisely for the good of each and of all. Where such a constitution has been digested, proposals for any partial subsequent reforms are justly to be regarded with strong suspicion; because where the parts of a system have been expressly framed

with a view to each other and to the whole, an alteration in any one of them introduced with a particular object is likely to harmonize ill with the rest, and to produce a general inconvenience greater than the local one which it was designed to remedy.

But it has rarely or never happened that the terms of this hypothesis have been fully complied with. In the constitutions given by the lawgivers of antiquity, or in that actually enjoyed by the United States of America, although these were framed much more on certain general principles than the constitutions of modern Europe, yet there was an order of men which they did not embrace, which formed no part in the civil edifice, and with regard to which the system of the legislator was imperfect, and required future revision. While all classes of *citizens* were provided for, there was a class of *men* which remained unregarded, and whom justice seemed to have abandoned—the class of predial or domestic slaves. Among the ancient lawgivers indeed, the time perhaps was never contemplated, when justice should have her perfect work, and all

who possessed the same human nature should be regarded as fit elements of civil society. But now that Christianity has so greatly enlarged and purified our notions of moral good, all systems, where slavery exists, are regarded as confessedly imperfect, and the propriety of improvement, confessed by all as a question of principle, is only contested on particular and temporary grounds. I have shewn, that even the cases which I acknowledge as exceptions are not to be considered as altogether such, in order more fully to confirm the general statement, that considering the origin and subsequent history of civil societies, there is a presumption a priori in favour of any alteration, whose avowed tendency is to extend or enlarge the enjoyment of civil rights.

And now I would ask of those who shrink from what they call liberal opinions, as if they were connected with a disregard for Christianity, in what do the opinions which have been here expressed differ from the spirit of the Gospel? Is it unchristian to labour to effect the destruction of injustice; to promote the growth of equal rights; to advance

the physical and moral condition of mankind by applying to the constitution of society those notions of perfect goodness and wisdom, which the Gospel, and the Gospel alone, has taught us? Or will it be said, that all worldly objects are too insignificant to engage the attention of an heir of immortality? Yet it is only by the pursuit of some worldly object that we can perform our worldly duty, and so train ourselves up for immortality; it is by improving the various faculties that are given to us that we can fit ourselves for our everlasting habitations. Or can the relief of the ordinary physical wants of individuals be so high and essential a virtue, and yet the remedying those political evils, which affect both the physical and moral condition of millions, be no fit object of our exertions? And since in the present state of society we can scarcely avoid being called upon to act, or to express an opinion directly or indirectly upon public matters which may influence the conduct of others, is it well to remain in such ignorance of the principles and facts of political science, that our practice is but a leap in the dark, and our advice and influence can do nothing but mislead?

society, but to the several societies of the human race themselves, who acknowledge no common law but that founded on the eternal principles of justice? Then if a contest ensue, its lawfulness must be decided on the same grounds which determine our judgment of national wars: one party must incur deep guilt in drawing the sword; but to which the guilt is to be attached depends solely on the merits of the question at issue, and in no degree on the former relation which subsisted between them while they were parts of the same society.

I may be allowed perhaps to notice one other impression, which tends strongly to indispose many minds a priori to what are called liberal principles: and this is the notion that the advocates for improvement rest their cause solely on theory, that the existing state of things may indeed be often liable to objection on abstract principles, but that practically it works and has worked well. No answer has been more frequent than this in the mouths of the enemies of Reform; none perhaps has so often satisfied the rising scruples of honest but ignorant minds, and persuaded them that they

may shut their eyes upon the evils which they see around them, for that the whole system with its evil and its good has had the sanction of experience; and that the plans proposed for its amendment are but the dreams of ingenious theorists, the mere imagination of intellectual enthusiasts. Now this belief, so injurious to our own moral improvement, as it accustoms us to a contented acquiescence in moral evil, is either altogether founded on falsehood, or is wholly inapplicable to the conclusions which they who inculcate it wish to make its practical consequence. It is false that experience sanctions existing institutions, and that theory alone objects to them. What is called theory, is in fact a wider experience than that which pretends exclusively to the name. The practical man sets his own individual experience, limited in place, and most span-like in duration, against that accumulated experience of many countries and all ages, whose conclusions he calls a theory. He presumes to judge of the whole by that small part of it which he has himself witnessed: he has seen the first stages only of intoxication, and knowing nothing but from his own observation, he calls it

mere theory, when he is told that the short-lived merriment and animation which had so charmed him would surely be followed by stupefaction and nausea. The effect of institutions can only be judged of after an experience far longer than the longest life of an individual; nor will one single specimen inform us how far local or temporary causes may have aggravated or softened their inherent properties. They must be watched from their origin to their extinction; their natural consequences must be distinguished from their accidental results; the experiment must be tried on various subjects in order to be satisfied that its operation is uniform: before we can be fairly said to judge of them from experience. But this true experience, furnishing indeed a safe and universal rule, is no other than what is often called theory; unattainable to the vulgar, because it alike exceeds their perseverance, their grasp of mind, and their capacities of discrimination; and hated by the ignorant and low principled, because it is at once above their reach, and because its lessons offer no apology for institutions founded on injustice, and supported by selfishness and folly.

So far then it is false, that men who are well acquainted with persons and things now existing, men who have mixed extensively in society in their own country, but whose knowledge of other times and other countries is exceedingly imperfect, have any right to put their experience on a level with that far more universal experience which thinking and enquiring minds have gained from a comprehensive study both of the present and the past. But if many of the advocates for reform in various parts of our institutions have been theorists in the true meaning of the term, if they have ventured to form conclusions on an imperfect induction, or from some defect in themselves have proposed systems almost as faulty as those which they wished to alter, they individually may be undeserving of confidence; yet this failure affords not the shadow of an excuse for the vaunts of their adversaries. "Even a one-eyed man is a king amongst the blind;" and the glimmering of twilight is better than the thick darkness on which it has begun to dawn. Let the light indeed shine more and more unto the perfect day; but let us not so complain of the indistinctness of the dawn as to prefer the unbroken

obscurity of midnight. Let those who complain of the ill-grounded theories of reformers reprove their fault in the best manner, by working their way themselves to a fuller knowledge; but let them not rest contented in the very depths of ignorance, because those who have assayed to soar into a purer region, have been unable in their first trial to escape altogether beyond the range of the mists of the valley.

But is there then so much to learn, and have our forefathers indeed lived in so intense a darkness? Let any Christian look first upon the volume of the New Testament, and then turn his eyes to the existing state of society, to the wars of ambition, to the conquests, the persecutions, the corruptions, the sufferings, the low principles and lower practice, which have prevailed during the last eighteen hundred years, amidst men who have professed the Christian faith, and called themselves the redeemed and sanctified people of God! Alas! for the words of Christ's Prayer, so often repeated in mockery, when we daily beg of God that his kingdom may come, whilst our institutions, our

principles, and our practice uphold the kingdom of another master! Alas! for the unfulfilled promises of the older prophecies, whose accomplishment has been so long hindered, while we either regard them as a splendid vision of eastern fancy, or murmur and are offended, because the blessings designed for a world that should be the image of Heaven have found no place amidst our evil passions and abounding iniquity! Dissatisfaction with ourselves is wisdom, but it is the most fatal folly to gaze with regret upon the past, rather than to turn with an eager and inquiring hope to the future. We are not worse than our fathers; it is shame enough that we are not more advanced than we are beyond their exceeding badness; but our desire should be to be ten thousand times better; not looking back to the things behind, but pressing forward to those that are before, until we grow up into the perfect man; into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

I write as a Christian to Christians, and I have thought it neither irrelevant to my particular subject, nor generally unimportant, to endeavour to

point out the unchristian tendency of those prejudices in favour of past times and established institutions which with too many close the ears and the understanding against the claims of truth and justice. Whereas he who knows the origin of society and its actual vicissitudes on the one hand, and has learnt from Christ's Gospel to understand what it ought to be on the other, will at once see that the antiquity of an institution does not afford a presumption in favour of its excellence; and that instead of idle language about holding fast to the laws of our ancestors, our constant object should be to carry on those successive improvements to which all that is good in them is owing; not to doat upon the productions of our childhood, but to labour to bring them to the perfection of the ripest wisdom of manhood. And we shall find that in the consideration of our immediate subject these general principles are peculiarly applicable.

The origin of the present form of civil society in Ireland was conquest; and what was more unfavourable to the establishment of just institutions,

it was a conquest obtained over a barbarous people by another scarcely less barbarous, and of a race and language at once distinct and dissimilar. Now in that order of God's providence by which even our wickedness is sometimes made to promote his purposes of good, it cannot be denied that the ultimate consequences of conquests have been in many instances highly beneficial to the conquered themselves; a better national character has been produced by the intermixture of different races, and laws, commerce, and general civilization have been communicated by the conquerors to their subjects. To talk in this case of a continued right in the conquered people to regain by force that which they had lost by force is palpably foolish, for in a few generations there are neither conquerors nor conquered remaining, but one united people sprung from the intermixture of both, and professing in its improved moral and physical condition reasons for remembering only with thankfulness the cause which first brought its two elements into contact. But where the wounds inflicted by the first conquest have never been suffered to

heal; where the conquerors have continued to form a distinct people, and the conquered have been regarded as an inferior race; where conquest, in short, has never been softened into union, but retains all the harshness of its original features, aggravated by successive centuries of irritation; such a state of things is a perpetual crime, and the original guilt of the conquerors must for ever extend to their posterity, so long as by neglecting to remedy or palliate its evil consequences they make themselves a party to it. It is too late then to talk of the inconveniences of extending the rights of citizens to those whose peculiar opinions disqualify them for an union with their conquerors. We brought them forcibly into our national society, and we must not shrink from the just consequences of our own act. And the plea of conscience when urged as an excuse for not offering atonement for our crime, while we continue to profit by its fruits, is no better than self-deceit and hypocrisy. If Protestants urge that they cannot allow Catholics to have any voice in the government, why did they bring a Catholic people into political connection

with themselves? If they so dread the infection of Catholic opinions, why do they oblige Catholics to live and breathe in the same society with themselves? But this they have chosen to do; and if their health be endangered, they have only themselves to thank for it.

In saying this, it will not be supposed that I am gravely arguing in favour of a total separation between this country and Ireland. When I urge that those who refuse to do Ireland justice, and make conscience their plea for the refusal, are bound not to be conscientious only where it suits their own interests, but to make restitution in full if they scruple at coming to a fair compromise; I mean to shew the futility of their plea, and to insist that it is only a deceived or self-deceiving conscience which advances it. In fact, it is a plea which would dissolve the whole fabric of society throughout Europe; and would make it impossible for men of different religions to live together as fellow-citizens, if they mutually insisted upon their own exclusive supremacy. The connection between this country

and Ireland is not now to be torn asunder; the injustice which we have done cannot now in that manner be rendered undone; but it is our bounden duty to remedy its actual evil effects. What ought to have been done long since, should at least no longer be delayed; we should hasten to remove all those marks of our original violence, which leave us still guilty till they are wiped away: we should make it as impossible even to dream of a separation with Ireland, as to break up England itself into the original elements of its heptarchy.

But it has been urged by Lord Bexley, that the Catholics of Ireland are not the Irish nation; that we are united with the Protestants of Ireland, and that they, politically speaking, constitute Ireland. Thus it is that the language of municipal law, so often the mere organ of power, is quoted to give an imposing sanction to injustice. What are the Protestants of Ireland, but military colonies planted by the conquering nation in a conquered province, who can only have a distinct existence so long as the evils of conquest are unatoned for, and the

tenure is one of might and not of right. Such in the reign of Augustus were the colonies of Narbo, Vienna, and Lugdunum in Gaul; of Corduba and Hispalis in Spain; and whilst these alone possessed the privileges of citizenship, whilst these alone were regarded by the Romans as enjoying legal existence, so long was the connection with Gaul and Spain forced and insecure, so long were the massacres and spoliations of the first Cæsar an enduring crime of the Roman government. But the Italian war had taught the Romans a memorable lesson; and the statesmen and lawyers of Rome were not incapable of profiting by the experience of the past. Within sixty years after the death of Augustus, the rights of Roman citizens were bestowed on all the free inhabitants of Gaul, and from that period Gaul was truly united to the empire, her old language and her old customs were gradually forgotten, and the bonds which bound her to Italy could only be torn asunder by the general convulsion of the civilized world. To consider then the Protestants of Ireland as the Irish nation, is merely to perpetuate the injustice of our original conquest; to say that although inferior in numbers,

they possess a great superiority in property, is to keep alive the memory of those sweeping confiscations which transferred the soil of Ireland to the conquerors, and of those more atrocious laws which, down to the year 1778, forbade the Irish Catholic to become a purchaser of land in his own country. Who can wonder, that if we on our part still display the trophies of victory, the majority of the Irish people should cherish a bitter recollection of their defeat? that if we, till within the last fifty years, so far abused the rights of conquest as to hinder the conquered from regaining by peaceful industry the property which they had lost, they should have remembered how they had lost it, and by what means alone they could expect to recover a share of it? The stream of events cannot flow backward, nor is there any fear that the injustice of our conquest will be removed by an opposite injustice: unless we obstinately refuse ourselves to obliterate its traces, and persist in treating Ireland as a conquered province, where our Protestant colonies alone are to enjoy the rights of citizens.

It may be urged as a last plea for still calling upon Parliament to persevere in the iniquities of our ancestors, that exclusion from the full rights of citizenship is not directed against the Irish Catholics as Irishmen, but as Catholics; and that the Catholics of England are in some respects subjected to still greater disqualifications. This also is one of those arguments which men are liable to advance, while they want the knowledge or the ability to connect the present state of things with the causes that produced it. That the majority of the Irish people are Catholics at this hour is almost demonstrably owing to the English conquest combined with the neglect of those measures which repair the evil of conquest. Had Ireland been left to herself, she would have experienced in all human probability the same course of events with the other countries of the North of Europe. Her kings would have become impatient of the papal pretensions; her aristocracy would have been jealous of the wealth and consequence of the Church; her commons would have been alienated by the unworthy lives of the clergy; and with these predisposing causes to aid them, the doctrines of the reformers would have

taken root as effectually as they did in Scotland and in England. Or had conquest been followed by an effectual union; had we known how to improve, and conciliate, and civilize, as well as we understood the arts of slaughter and confiscation, Ireland would have had one heart with England, and Connaught and Munster would have opposed no greater obstacles to Protestantism than Cornwall and Cumberland; it would have been merely the slowness of ignorance, and not the deep aversion of national hatred. But now Ireland is Catholic because Protestantism was associated in her eyes with subjugation and oppression; she clung the more fondly to her superstitions because they were renounced and persecuted by her enemy. And who can doubt but that the dread and hatred of Popery which prevailed in England during the seventeenth century were at least greatly aggravated by causes arising out of her political relations with Ireland. If there was one thing more than another which made Popery detestable, it was the Irish rebellion and massacre of 1642: or at a later period, the support which Ireland gave to James the Second, and the Acts of James's Irish Parliament in 1689. Now

although religious animosity had a great share in the violences of both these periods; yet it was so mixed up with feelings of national and political hatred, that they ought not to be regarded as the mere effects of Catholic bigotry, but as the atrocious vengeance of a barbarous people upon those who had conquered and held them in subjection. In all these cases, to remember only the wickedness of the retaliation, and to pass over the injustice which provoked it, is at once morally and politically blameable. Let us abhor as much as we will the individual actors in scenes of cruelty, but let us not think that their guilt can cancel ours; or that because evil has been overthrown by worse evil, that therefore we are justified in restoring and upholding it.

Once again, it is urged by some that the disabilities imposed on the Catholics are no other than all governments may enact in their discretion upon particular classes of their subjects: and parallels are sought for in the law which disables clergymen from sitting in the House of Commons; and in those which make the possession of a certain

amount of income an indispensable qualification for a member of the legislature, or even for an elector in a county election. With respect to the privilegium against Horne Tooke, for such in fact it was, which assumed the thin cloak of a general principle to cover its real motives of personal aversion and fear, it is difficult to conceive how one act of injustice can be a defence for another; and the depriving the Clergy of their rights as citizens, when their old rights as a distinct order in the State had been taken from them, was a measure worthy of the suspicions and violence of the time at which it was effected. But to require in a legislator the possession of such wealth as ought fairly to place him above any corrupt temptation, is allowed by the highest authorities in political science to be a provision for the common benefit; and it is a principle equally just and beneficial, however particular circumstances may sometimes require it to be modified, that he who has no interest in the maintenance of society, should have no voice in the choice of those who are to defend and govern it. But even admitting that it were otherwise, yet there is one great distinction between these laws

of disqualification, and those which affect the Catholics of Ireland. The clergy form one particular profession; the poor form one particular class in society; but they are intermingled locally as well as politically with other professions and other classes; so that it is impossible that either should constitute a distinct society by themselves. They are essentially parts of a whole; and as such, submission is their duty; and Government may lawfully, on its own conscientious belief of its being for the general good, impose on them restrictions which they may consider injurious. And this same principle applies also to the Catholics of England, whose claims certainly could not be urged with justice if they were likely to be dangerous to the Church establishment of England, that is to the interests of the great majority of that society of which the Catholics are necessarily and naturally a part. It applies also, it may be observed, to very small portions of a national society, even though they may be locally distinct; as, for instance, it were idle for the inhabitants of one single county, united as they are by laws, language, customs, and habits of living,

to the rest of the nation, to consider themselves as capable of forming a distinct national society. Thus when Johnson[a], in order to ridicule the pretensions of the American Congress, imagines a congress of Cornishmen assembled at Truro to hold a similar language, and then adds, that he knows no argument used by the Americans which may not with greater justice be urged by the Cornishmen, he forgets the infinitely different ratio which America and Cornwall bear towards Great Britain; and that distance, resources, and population fitted the former as decidedly for a separate social existence, as its close local connection, and its comparative insignificance in power and numbers, marked the latter as a natural part of the civil society of Britain. Now the Catholics of Ireland are not a single profession, like the clergy; nor a single class of society, like the poor; on the contrary, they comprehend all the different elements of a nation; nobility, wealth, intelligence, numbers, and variety of professions

[a] In his Pamphlet, entitled "Taxation no Tyranny," vol. viii. of his Works, 8vo. edit. 1806.

and occupations. Nor again are they so locally mixed up with the mass of British society, as to form only a necessary part of it, incapable of a separate existence. On the contrary, Nature herself has marked out their boundaries with a decided hand; and Ireland is, geographically speaking, a world by itself. Further, they are not so insignificant a portion of the society of the empire, as to be bound under all circumstances to submit to the will of the majority, because their separation could not be contemplated without ridicule. Many states in Europe far inferior to Ireland in population and resources, and far less favourably situated, have enjoyed, and still enjoy, a happy and glorious independence. If by a persevering refusal to treat the Irish as citizens, we urge them hereafter to consider themselves as foreigners, they may be called rebels in England during the continuance of the struggle, but as soon as it is over the name of rebellion will be exchanged for that of war, and even municipal law will allow of our then giving it a title which universal law and the voice of all other nations had conferred on it from the very beginning.

Nay, even were we to extend the principle of non-resistance to societies as well as to individuals; if we hold that war is under all circumstances unlawful, and that the nation which repels injury by force is ever to be condemned, still this cannot lessen the guilt of those who offer injury, or of those who make the injustice of the government their own by their loud petitions to persevere in it. Naboth certainly would have been guilty of rebellion, had he attempted as an individual to maintain his vineyard against Ahab by force; but would this have altered the wickedness of the king's act in seizing it, or of those counsellors who had instigated him to the crime? If it be sinful even to resist evil, how much more sinful is it to do evil? But some are not ashamed to argue, that although the present state of things in Ireland is the result of injustice, yet that it is not injustice now to maintain it; that our fathers are answerable for the sin, and that we may fairly reap the profit of it. I know not a more striking proof of the lamentable ignorance in which many good men live as to all political duties, than that any one calling himself a Christian should use such an argument as

this. Apply it to private life, and he who would advance it is not an erroneous reasoner, but deficient in common honesty: "non verbis et disputatione philosophorum sed vinculis et carcere fatigandus." The Catholic St. Louis, King of France, had other notions of Christian duty than these. He, not contented with the scrupulous justice of his own Christian life, "appointed commissaries to inquire what possessions had been unjustly annexed to the Royal domain during the two last reigns. These were restored to the proprietors, or, where length of time had made it difficult to ascertain the claimant, their value was distributed among the poor [b]." This was the real tenderness of an enlightened conscience; this was a true horror of the contamination of that worst idolatry, unrighteous gain. But to make no attempts to compensate for our fathers' injustice, or to think that sin can ever die to those who retain the benefit of it without repairing the evil which it occasioned, is indeed to "allow the deeds of our fathers," and to expose ourselves to the heavy judgment denounced against those who repent not of their fathers' crimes.

[b] Hallam's Middle Ages, vol. i. p. 42. 8vo. edit.

As a last resource we are opposed by the argument, "that men have no right to govern themselves, but only to be kindly and justly treated by their governors. That therefore the Irish Catholics may indeed claim exemption from persecution and tyranny, but that they have no right to a voice in the Legislature, or to exercise the highest functions of free citizens, the administration of the whole state." Now if men, that is, if societies of men, for we are not speaking of individuals, have not a right to govern themselves, who has the right to govern them? Government is either a matter of agreement, as when the proprietors in a joint stock company depute some of their body to manage the concerns of the whole; or it arises out of a natural superiority, either temporary, as that of men over boys and children, or perpetual, as that of men over beasts. Now it is very true that beasts have no right to govern themselves, but only to be kindly and justly governed; for men have a natural superiority over them, which is perpetual and unalterable; and God has accordingly declared his will, that to men they should be subject. It is true also, that boys and children

have no right to govern themselves while they remain boys and children, for there also is a natural superiority in their parents and elders over them; and God has accordingly in this case also sanctioned this authority by his express law. But as soon as boys arrive at manhood, the superiority of nature on the part of the parent expires: then therefore the child has a right to govern himself, and this the law of Christian countries, justly, as I conceive, interpreting the divine law, has agreed to acknowledge. A child then has no right to govern himself while he is a child, but he has a right so to be governed as shall qualify him for governing himself hereafter; and what should we say of the guilt of that parent who should wilfully neglect his son's education in order to protract the period of his own authority? Now according to the general belief of ancient times, such a natural superiority existed in some classes of men over the rest, and was derived from a supposed divine extraction: for the descendants of those deified men who were amongst the earliest objects of idolatry, were accounted themselves to be a race of demigods or heroes, and to be entitled to the exclusive posses-

sion of the offices of king and priest; of king, because as men were the natural lords of the brute creation, so demigods were the natural rulers of men; of priest, because the gods would receive no strangers' services with the same satisfaction as those offered by their own descendants. These were the διοτρεφέες βασιλῆες of the heroic age of Greece, and a similar belief gave a sacred authority to the Bramins of India, the Lucumones of Etruria, the Patricians of Rome, and the hero race who according to the national traditions were the earliest sovereigns of Egypt and of Aztlan. It was the government of such kings that the old philosophers accounted the most natural and perfect of all governments; because it was the government of a superior being, so far exalted above the nature of his subjects, that his single worth and fitness to govern surpassed the sum total of the virtues of the whole people besides. On similar principles the existence of slavery was defended; some divisions of the human race were naturally fitted to command, and others to obey; and the former, amongst whom the upholders of this doctrine took care to class themselves, were only acting agreeably

to the order of nature when they made the latter their slaves. Still however it was a question whether this inferiority was accidental or perpetual; for if it were the former, then emancipation was the right of the slaves so soon as they became fit for it, and the duty of the masters was to prepare them in the mean time for exercising hereafter the power of self government. But in all these cases the principle was just and intelligible, that a superiority of nature conferred a title to authority over beings of an inferior order; and they who believed kings to be of superhuman extraction and to possess superhuman virtues, justly maintained their divine right to govern mankind, and justly asserted that men were lawfully subject to them, and could claim no more from them than they were bound themselves to render to the brute creation, that is, just and kind treatment, so far as it was compatible with an absolute right of dominion. When however the conclusions of one set of premises are appended to premises entirely opposite, the incongruity would be truly ludicrous, were not its consequences too mischievous to allow of laughter. It is among

the most humiliating instances of human folly, that Christians while holding as one of the first principles of their religion the common descent of all mankind, their common sinful nature, and common need of being born again in Christ, should adopt a conclusion which rested wholly on their supposed different extraction, and on the high purity and excellence of some particular races contrasted with the degraded state of others. To us who admit of no such differences it is a conclusion little better than monstrous; and the very fact that no beings exist in the world who enjoy a natural superiority over mankind, and that no one race of mankind possesses except from accidental causes such a superiority over another, shews decisively that God has given to men the right of self government, and that as no one race can claim dominion as its peculiar birthright, so all lawful power over them is derived solely from their own consent, and is a mere matter of arrangement for the general benefit. Mankind therefore have a right to govern themselves, that is to say, society is the supreme power on earth, and the ordinances of society, or the laws and the com-

mands of magistrates who act in the name and for the welfare of the society, are binding upon all the individual members of it; but neither has any one national society any authority to govern another, nor still less have magistrates, who are but the officers of society, any right to rule contrary to the will of that society, or to exercise any greater power than it may authorize. And if such magistrates, by the physical force of a body of men purposely kept distinct from the interests and feelings of the community, exercise and maintain a despotic power over society; it is a state as monstrous as if wild beasts were to occupy any country to the exclusion of mankind; and the social body would be as fully justified in delivering itself from the unnatural violence of one of these brute enemies as of the other. The Christian Scriptures indeed enjoin conscientious submission to government on the part of individuals, resting this duty on the divine authority vested in it, as the representative on earth of our supreme moral Governor. They strongly condemn the doctrines of the Fifth Monarchy men, and of the ancient Jews, who held that

the saints were not subject to any earthly society; especially when it consisted of heathens, because they had one only King in heaven. They discourage the notion so common amongst religious bigots, that there is something profane in political institutions with which the servants of God should not intermeddle. On the contrary, the apostles teach that these political institutions are God's appointed means of governing the world, and that he so highly regards them as to invest them with one of his own attributes, the dispensation of good to the well disposed, and of punishment to the evil doer. If they are perverted from fulfilling these purposes, they are faulty and require amendment, and every servant of God should use his best endeavours to restore them to their designed purity. But that they who had so perverted them should be allowed to profit by their own wrong, that they should in spite of nature transfer the principles of government exercised over beings naturally inferior to the government of beings naturally equal; and that this violation of the manifest laws of God's providence, and obstruction of his declared will for the perfecting of human society, should defend

itself by arguments grounded upon falsehood and idolatry, and then claim to be sanctioned by divine truth, affords altogether a melancholy instance of the art with which the great enemy of all goodness employs the pretext of respect for the Gospel, when he would most effectually prevent the Gospel from bringing forth its proper fruits.

And now I would briefly recapitulate the proofs of my original position, that it is a direct Christian duty to grant the claims of the Roman Catholics, and a direct sin, however ignorantly committed, to endeavour to procure the rejection of them. We conquered Ireland unjustly, and have perpetuated the evils, and consequently the guilt, of our first conquest. We refuse to admit the Irish nation into the pale of our civil society, whilst, by admitting into it those Protestant military colonies by which we have from time to time garrisoned Ireland, we keep up a broad line of distinction between union and conquest, between the small minority whom we make our fellow-citizens, and the majority whom we treat as subjects. We plead the

inconveniences to ourselves of a connection with Ireland on equal and just terms, while we effected in the first instance, and still insist on maintaining, a connection on unequal and unjust terms. We talk of the sin of uniting ourselves with Papists, yet we force Papists to belong to us; and we plead the idolatry of the Catholics as a reason for not doing them justice, when our own injustice has been the cause of this idolatry still existing: and had it not been for us, Ireland would in all human probability have been at this moment Protestant. We confound an entire national society with particular orders or professions of society, and sacrifice the rights of one nation to the interests of another, because the interests of a part of a nation may lawfully be sacrificed to the paramount rights of the whole. We attempt sometimes to justify our conduct by an argument, which, if acted upon in private life, would cause a man to be banished from all honest society; namely, that we are not bound to repair an injustice done by others, even though we continue to reap the profits of it. We attempt at other times to defend it by transferring

conclusions, legitimately drawn from premises which we acknowledge to be false, to the very contrary premises which we acknowledge to be true. And we individually, that is, the clergy, gentry, farmers, and shopkeepers of this country, make ourselves each separately guilty of the injustice which we have committed as a nation, by calling upon our rulers to persevere in this wickedness, when they appear inclined to relieve us and our posterity from the curse which it must entail upon us, and to return at last to the path of duty.

It is not therefore the advocates, but the enemies, of the Catholics who are preferring state policy to their Christian duty; it is not their advocates who would sacrifice the Protestant religion to views of worldly expediency, but their adversaries, who would violate the plain duties of our common Christianity, rather than consent to the political evil of abandoning Ireland to itself, if their consciences will not permit them to treat it with justice. The plea of religion is wholly foreign to the question, except upon such grounds as would

authorize direct persecution. If the believers in a true religion claim a title to restrain those who are in error from the enjoyment of their natural rights, in order to have a greater chance of converting them to the truth; then also they may pretend to persecute them directly with the same object, and there is no doubt that a thorough persecution will generally root out the doctrines against which it is directed. Or if they claim a natural superiority on account of the truth of their religion, so that they are fitted to govern unbelievers, or heretics, on the same principles that men govern children, this is a pretension far less reasonable than if we were to claim dominion over those nations whose constitutions were unfavourable to the welfare of their people, or whose moral character we might judge to be inferior to our own. What human power can pronounce authoritatively upon the truth of a religion, when every nation will with equal zeal maintain the truth of its own? Or does Christ authorize his servants as such to assume the office of judging the world, until the day when he shall himself appear to pronounce the judgment?

Hitherto then I have argued the Question solely on the ground of justice: and have shewn, that a third part nearly of the inhabitants of the whole empire, containing in themselves all the different elements of a nation, locally distinct, differing in race, and a large part of them in language also, from the people of Great Britain, cannot be considered as necessarily forming only a part of our national society, on whom we as the majority may impose what rules we will, while they have no other duty but submission. We are bound either to treat them fairly, or not to meddle with them at all; and if our constitution must be altered before they can be members of it, we are bound to alter it; as we, by making them subjects unjustly, contracted voluntarily the obligation to make them citizens; or else we are labouring at this hour under the guilt of our ancestors' usurpations. But although this would be the plain path of duty under any circumstances, yet it would be a most painful alternative, had we to choose between the overthrow of our religious institutions, and the dismemberment of the empire. No national evil that did not involve national sin could be greater in my

of them. I am willing to suppose that the Irish race are deeply tainted with barbarism; that they know little of obedience to law, that they are the slaves of passion and feeling, and by consequence deficient in the highest qualification of human nature, self-denying virtue founded upon a high-principled sense of duty to God and man. I would allow also, that in no part of Europe does the Roman Catholic religion exist in a more aggravated form; no where are its superstitions more gross, or its bigotry more ferocious; no where is it a more fearful corruption of Christ's Gospel. But with this unpromising race and with this dreadful religion we have chosen to connect ourselves; and we have thus deprived ourselves of the right to regard them with mere disgust and abhorrence; we must endeavour to better them, and the more so as the virulence of the evil is in a great degree to be attributed to our own neglect or absolute ill treatment. Now how are they to be bettered, or can they not be bettered at all? They can be bettered, for the Roman Catholic religion wears so different an aspect in different countries, that it may evidently be influenced by external causes: and

they who believe in the common origin of all mankind, must conclude that all important moral differences between one race and another may be gradually removed as they have been created; and that as unfavourable circumstances made them differ, so a happier system and better institutions may in time restore their original equality. Now a religion may be externally influenced either by forcible or by gentle measures; by persecution, or by persuasion and example. I will not insult any of my readers by enlarging on the utter wickedness of the first of these means; but will at once proceed to consider those others which we may and ought to use. If we wish to influence any one by our arguments or by our practice, should we be most likely to succeed if previously he regarded us with suspicion and ill will, or if he were living on friendly terms with us? The question may seem too simple to be seriously asked; and yet there are some who believe that Protestantism is less likely to win its way among the Irish Catholics, when being treated justly and kindly they will regard its professors as countrymen and friends,

judgment than the destruction of our Protestant Church Establishment. That union of Church and State, which so many good men lament and some condemn, appears to me to be far too powerful a means of diffusing the blessings of Christianity to be lightly broken asunder; and although I earnestly desire to see the actual abuses of that union remedied, yet even now the good which it is daily working is such as to make every sincere Christian regard at least with anxiety the prospect of its dissolution. I have said thus much, because the advocates of the Catholic claims are often accused of indifference to the safety of our own Establishment. With whatever justice this may be imputed to some of their number, I beg in my own case to protest against the charge as wholly groundless and untrue. I think certainly, that even the existence of our Establishment would be too dearly purchased, if it could only be upheld by injustice; I should be unwilling to do evil that good might come; to call upon Satan to cast out Satan. But our Protestant Church is one of the greatest blessings with which England has been favoured; and may it exist secure from every enemy under the care of its

divine Head, and trusting in its lawful arms, the truth of its doctrines, and the holiness of its members!

With this feeling, not less sincere than theirs who express most loudly their fears for its actual safety, it is to me a matter of deep joy, that the very course which justice calls on us to follow, should be also that which is most likely to ensure the safety of the Protestant Church, and to extend the influence of its doctrines: and that the very act which does justice to Ireland, holds out also the fairest promise of her moral and spiritual improvement. So universally true is our Lord's declaration, that if we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all other things shall be added unto us; if we do our duty without fear of the consequences, we shall most surely gain those advantages, which had they tempted us to flinch from our duty we should for ever have forfeited.

Now at the commencement of this argument I am willing to take the picture of Ireland and the Irish Catholics from those who think most unfavourably

ants are regarded with suspicion and abhorrence, as in Ireland. On the contrary, where Protestants are numerous, and are living on friendly terms with Catholics, there the Catholic religion exists in a very improved state, and its worst abuses are practically done away with. I have now before me two Catechisms: the one a Spanish one, printed at Valladolid, apparently during the war with Napoleon, but the date of the year is not given; the other printed at Rheims in 1822, and circulated by the orders of the Archbishop of Rheims, for the use of his diocese. Much certainly that is offensive to a Protestant ear may be found even in the latter; yet the difference in tone between it and the Spanish Catechism is very remarkable; and sufficiently shews that the Roman Catholic religion is not always practically one and the same, although its members, if pressed on the point by Protestants, might think themselves bound to assert its unchangeableness. For example, in the Spanish Catechism, after the catechumen has expounded the several Articles of the Apostles' Creed, the catechist proceeds to ask, whether there are any other things which he believes? To which the answer

is given[c], "Yes, father; every thing contained in the holy Scriptures, and every thing revealed by God to his Church." "And what things are these?" proceeds the catechist. "That," replies the catechumen, "you should not ask of me, who am ignorant. There are Doctors in our holy Mother Church, who will know how to answer it." "You say well," resumes the catechist, "that it becomes the Doctors of the Church and not such as you to give an account of the extent of all the points of faith. It is enough for you to give an account of the Articles as contained in the Creed." And again in another place, the catechumen, after enumerating the several means of grace, mentions as the last and most powerful[d], "the making

[c] Si, Padre, todo lo que está en la Sagrada Escutura, y quanto Dios tiene revelado á su Iglesia. P. Qué cosas son estas? R. Eso no me lo pregunteis á mi, que soy ignorante: Doctores tiene la santa Madre Iglesia, que lo sabrán responder. M. Bien decis, qué a los Doctores conviene, y no á vosotros, dar cuenta por extenso de las cosas de la Fé: á vosotros bástaos darla de los Articulos como se contienen en el Credo.

[d] Por decir uno que abraza muchos, el elegir un confesor sábio, virtuoso, y prudente, y sujetarse á el en todo. M. Bien decis.

choice of a wise, virtuous, and prudent confessor, and obeying him in every thing." "You say well," rejoins the Catechist, "and remember to act accordingly; for such a confessor will be like an angel, who will guide you by proposing to you these and other means of grace," &c. Now to the first of these extracts there is nothing at all similar in the French Catechism; and with regard to the confessor, all that is said is a practical rule at the end of the Article on Confession, recommending every one to choose a good confessor, who may question them, instruct them in their duties, and be a check on them; and advising them "to listen to his counsels, and follow them with docility." Again, in the French Catechism the nature of the honour paid to the Virgin Mary and the Saints is carefully defined; and it is expressly said, that we may not worship either the Virgin, or the Saints and Angels, but

Hacedlo pues vosotros asi, pues este os será como un Angel, que os guiará, proponiendo-os estos y otros medios, &c.

I have inserted the original words of these passages, because, as my knowledge of Spanish is exceedingly slight, I may possibly have committed some mistakes in my translation of them; although I believe I have not mistaken the exact sense.

God alone: nor may we pray to them to give us grace, but to pray for it to God in our behalf; and that the cross and the images of the Saints are not to be respected in themselves; for they have in them no divinity and no virtue; Catholics address to them no prayers, and put no trust in them; but they may be honoured for the sake of those whom they represent to us. But in the Spanish Catechism there are none of these explanations, and it is simply said that we should honour the images of the Virgin, and of the Saints, and pray to the Angels and Saints, as to our mediators. Finally, in the French Catechism there is at the end of every Article a list of passages from the Scripture bearing on the subject of the Article, which can only be inserted in order to encourage the study of very large parts of the Scripture at least, if it does not imply the recommendation of the whole volume. There is not a word in the Spanish Catechism, on the other hand, which refers the reader to the Bible, or would lead him to consider the study of the Scriptures as useful to him. And this brings me to a difference in the Roman Catholic religion as it exists in

France, Germany, and the Netherlands, on the one hand, and in Italy on the other, of which every one who has travelled through these countries may speak from his own knowledge. In the three former, crucifixes by the road side are sufficiently common: but images of the Virgin and the Saints are comparatively rare; while in Italy these last are more frequent than the crucifix. Again, most of the modern paintings in the French Churches are taken from Scriptural subjects: and what is perhaps even more remarkable, amongst a collection of thirty or forty coloured prints of the cheapest description which I looked over in a shop at Cologne in June last, there was not one relating to any legend of the Saints or the Virgin, but the subjects of all were taken from the New Testament. Whereas at Rome and in its neighbourhood the pictures and legends of the Saints are far more numerous on the walls of the Churches, by the road sides, in shops, and in houses, than pictures relating to our Lord, or that are taken from the Old or New Testament. Now it may be very true that a French or German priest, if pressed by a Protestant, would declare that the faith of his Church was one

and unchangeable, and that the Catholics of Italy held the same doctrines as himself: but still the practical effect is infinitely different, if the parts of these doctrines which are prominently brought forward be in one country the main truths of Christianity which Catholics hold in common with Protestants, and in another their own peculiar corruptions of it. And this more Christian aspect of the Roman Catholic faith exists in every country where it has been much in contact with Protestantism, *except in Ireland;* while there, on the contrary, it presents itself in its very worst form. This is in itself a phenomenon; and this alone, if duly considered, should induce every man who is anxious for the religious improvement of his countrymen to promote the admission of the Irish Catholics to their civil rights. Wherever Catholics and Protestants have lived together on a friendly footing, the influence of Protestantism has been insensibly operating, and has practically improved the character of Catholicism; but where they have lived together as a degraded and a persecuting caste; while the one has groaned under a system of exclusion, and the other exulted in the enjoyment of its ascendancy,

there has been no room for the exercise of any beneficial influence; men's religion has become their party also; and thus its most distinctive peculiarities have been rather obstinately maintained than softened or abandoned. Yet the Irish Protestant Church is wealthy and learned; and has numbered amongst its ministers some of the most apostolical men who have ever borne the Christian name. Under any other circumstances their talents and their virtues, and the political influence of their Church, might have attracted the respect and love of the Catholics, might have drawn them into a cordial union in works of charity and public utility, and might in time have induced them to tolerate, if not, like the Catholics of Germany, to encourage, the circulation of the Scriptures amongst their people. But in Ireland the system of ascendancy has poisoned every thing; and while the Catholic regarded the Protestant as an oppressor, and the Protestant looked upon the Catholic as meditating insurrection, both were repelled from all approaches to union; and each was forward to hurl upon the other the names of heretic and idolater.

Nor should it be forgotten, that if the influence of Protestantism has improved the Catholic religion in Germany, it might be expected, if it were once disentangled from its encumbering armour of ascendancy, to produce a much stronger effect in Ireland. That which the Puritans charged upon the Church of England as its crime, has always recommended it to the Catholics as the least offensive of the Protestant Churches; I mean, its form of Church government, its Liturgy, and its ceremonies. Hitherto the objects of our Reformers, in avoiding all needless departure from the doctrines and discipline of the Church of Rome, have not been fully answered; their policy has perhaps disgusted more Protestants than it has conciliated Catholics. I do not mean therefore to urge that it was blameable; but it will be a great reproach to ourselves if, after having suffered so long from its ill effects, as exemplified in our bitter dissensions with the Puritans, we do not now avail ourselves of the opportunity which Ireland affords, to realize some of its intended benefits. A Puritan clergy in Ireland, or a clergy at all partaking of the spirit of Puritanism, would be an evil which the Govern-

ment should carefully watch over, and to the utmost of its power vigorously prevent. There should be no furious commentaries on the Apocalypse, no raving about the sin of tolerating idolaters. The deep folly of such conduct can hardly be an excuse for its utter uncharitableness, and the incalculable mischief of its consequences. Our language to the Roman Catholics should be that of St. Paul to the Jews: "Believest thou the Prophets? I know that thou believest." "After the way that you call heresy, so worship we the God of our fathers, believing none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come." "You have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." You are our brethren, "yours are the fathers," and "if concerning the Gospel you are at all our enemies, yet are you beloved for the fathers' sake," even those same fathers[e], who in their heroic zeal for Christ's sake became the fathers of this very nation in Christ, and "in Christ Jesus have begotten us through the Gospel." And if they receive our charity with unkindness, against all example: if our Church after all shall produce less effect upon them than has been

[e] Pope Gregory and Augustine.

wrought by other Protestant communions, whose differences with them are more universal, we shall then at least be entitled to say what at present would be an impious mockery, "Your blood be upon your own heads, we are clean." We have at last presented truth to you fairly, not as your oppressors and persecutors from whose hands even truth herself must be received with suspicion, but as your countrymen and brethren, not pretending to have dominion over your bodies, but, if it might be, willing to deliver your minds from error, and to be helpers of your joy. If you reject it now, you reject not us, but the truth itself: your fall will be your own fault, and we shall be no more guilty of having thrown a stumbling-block in your way, by uniting truth of religious profession with the practice of iniquity and oppression.

The answer to all this is the mere repetition of the assertion, "that popery is unchanged and unchangeable." It is in vain that we appeal to facts, and shew that it is not unchanged in practice; that in some countries it is practically Christianity mixed with some errors, while in others it is practically idol-

atry and superstition bearing the name of Christianity: that the German Catholics who circulate the Scriptures are not exactly the same sort of persons as the Italian Catholics who carefully proscribe them: that the Catholic Kings of Saxony, who being the absolute Sovereigns of a Protestant people have left the Protestant Church Establishment in Saxony uninjured and unmolested for a hundred years; and the reigning Monarch in particular, who by a recent law will allow no convert from Protestantism to be received into the Catholic Church till after an interval of some months after his declaring his change, or without producing a certificate from his Protestant minister that he had tried without effect to shake his conviction; that these Catholic princes do not exactly resemble that picture of a persecuting bigot, which we from the single example of James the Second pronounce to be the common likeness of all Catholic sovereigns. Or if we say that the Pope would be very thankful to our zealous Protestants if they could make their words good, and prove that his political influence over all Catholics outweighed all considerations of allegiance, patriotism, or national interest; if we suggest that not only have the Kings of

France, the eldest sons of the Church, constantly asserted against the Popes the rights of their crown and nation; but that Pope Pius the Sixth went from Rome to Vienna in person to deprecate in vain the vigorous ecclesiastical reforms of the Emperor Joseph the Second; that the Republic of Venice, by its well known distinction between the Church and the Court of Rome, resisted all political interference of the Popes while acknowledging their spiritual supremacy: and that neither the Catholic cantons of Switzerland nor the Catholic subjects of Prussia have ever allowed their religion to interfere with their civil duties to their country and their King: if we quote all these facts and a hundred others of the same kind; our opponents content themselves with answering, that they know nothing about facts, (which indeed is true,) but that they know that a Catholic must always be a bigot, and must always obey the Pope implicitly. They say that Catholics must be bigots, because they believe that no heretics can be saved; that they cannot change their opinions, because holding the Church to be infallible, what she has once decreed must for ever remain valid; or at least

that they are fairly chargeable with all the doctrines professed by the Council of Trent, until another General Council shall have declared that those doctrines are no longer to be maintained. If we bring instances of Catholics who have shewn themselves not bigotted, and who have not considered themselves bound to obey the Pope in temporal matters; then we are told that these are not true Catholics: and although if this be so, a majority of the Catholics of Europe are not true Catholics, and the probability is that the Catholics of Ireland will be no truer, in this sense of the term, than those of the continent, yet it is always assumed that *they* will retain the extremest rigour of the tenets of their Church, even under circumstances which, as experience has shewn, have generally qualified them.

It is important however to enter into this subject somewhat more fully, and to shew the unfairness or the ignorance of the enemies of the Catholics when they thus press upon them the most obnoxious tenets of the worst ages of papal superstition and violence. Nearly three centuries have now

elapsed since the dissolution of the Council of Trent; and since that time no General Council has been assembled, and the Catholic Church has had no opportunity of officially declaring its sentiments. As then the long suspension of the sittings of the Convocation of our own Church has caused many things to remain unaltered in our Liturgy and Church Government and probably in our Articles, which would have been reformed ere now, had the Church still possessed the means of expressing its collective sentiments; the very same thing may be fairly presumed with regard to the doctrines of the Council of Trent.

But we are not left to mere conjecture as to the possibility of a Church heartily disapproving its former official Acts without having ever actually disavowed them. Is there any member of the Church of England now alive, who does not disclaim and condemn the provisions and orders which I have here extracted from the "Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical, treated and agreed upon by the two Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the rest of the Bishops and Clergy of those

Provinces, in their Synods begun at London and York, 1640, and published for the due observation of them by his Majesty's authority under the Great Seal of England." I quote these Canons the more gladly[a], because they are very little known; as it would be impossible for honest men so often to deny that the Church of England was officially and by its public Acts a persecuting Church, if they had even suspected the existence of such Canons as the following.

From Canon I. Concerning the Regal power.

" For any person or persons to set up, maintain, or avow in any their (i. e. the realms or territories of kings) said realms or territories respectively,

[a] They are to be found in " A Collection of Articles, Injunctions, Canons, Orders, &c. of the Church of England, *published to vindicate the Church of England*, and to promote uniformity and *peace* in the same," by Sparrow, in 1671; a proof, by the way, that in spite of the non-confirmation of them by the statute 13 Charles II. the clergy were not yet inclined to disavow them.

under any pretence whatsoever, any independent coactive power, either papal or popular, (whether directly or indirectly,) is to undermine their great royal office, and cunningly to overthrow that most sacred ordinance, which God himself hath established: and so is treasonable against God, as well as against the king."

From Canon III. For the suppressing of the growth of Popery.

"But if neither conferring nor censures will prevail with such persons, (i. e. Roman Catholics,) the Church hath no way left but complaints to the secular power; and for them we straitly enjoin, that all Deans and Archdeacons, and all having inferior or exempt jurisdiction, shall every year within six months after any Visitation by them holden, make certificate unto their several Bishops, or Archbishop, (if it be within his diocese,) under their seal of office, of all such persons who have been presented unto them as aforesaid, under pain

of suspension from their said jurisdictions by the space of one whole year.

" And we in like manner enjoin all Archbishops and Bishops, that once every year at the least they certify under their Episcopal seal in parchment, unto the Justices of Assize of every county in the circuits and within their dioceses respectively, the names and surnames not only of those who have been presented unto them from the said Deans, Archdeacons, &c. but of those also who upon the oaths of churchwardens and other sworn-men at their Visitations, or upon the information of ministers employed in the said conferences, have been presented unto them, that so the said intended proceedings may have the more speedy and the more general success.

" In particular, it shall be carefully inquired into at all Visitations under the oaths of the churchwardens and other sworn-men, what recusants or Popish persons have been either married or buried, or have had their children baptized otherwise than

according unto the rules and forms established in the Church of England; and the names of such delinquents (if they can learn them, or otherwise such names as for the time they carry) shall be as aforesaid given up to the Bishop, who shall present them to the Justices of Assize, to be punished according to the statutes.

" And for the education of recusants' children, since by Canon already established no man can teach school, (no not in any private house,) except he be allowed by the Ordinary of the place, and withal have subscribed to the Articles of Religion established in the Church of England: we therefore straitly enjoin, that forthwith at all Visitations there be diligent inquiry made by the churchwardens or other sworn ecclesiastical officers of each parish, under their oaths, who are employed as schoolmasters to the children of recusants; and that their several names be presented to the Bishop of the diocese, who citing the said schoolmasters, shall make diligent search whether they have subscribed or no; and if they or any of them be found to refuse subscription, they shall be forbidden to

teach hereafter, and censured for their former presumption; and withal the names of him or them that entertain such a schoolmaster, shall be certified to the Bishop of the diocese, who shall at the next Assize present them to the Judges to be proceeded against according to the statutes. And if they subscribe, enquiry shall be made what care they take for the instruction of the said children in the Catechism established in the Book of Common Prayer. And all Ordinaries shall censure those whom they find negligent in the said instruction; and if it shall appear, that the parents of the said children do forbid such schoolmasters to bring them up in the doctrine of the Church of England, they shall notwithstanding do their duty; and if thereupon the said parents shall take away their children, the said schoolmasters shall forthwith give up their names unto the Bishop of the diocese, who shall take care to return them to the Justices of Assize in manner and form aforesaid. And because some may cunningly elude this decree, by sending their children to be bred beyond the seas, therefore we ordain, that the churchwardens and other sworn ecclesiastical officers shall likewise

make careful enquiry, and give in upon their oaths at all Visitations, the names of such recusants' children who are so sent beyond the seas to be bred there, or whom they probably suspect to be so sent: which names as aforesaid shall be given up to the Bishop, and from him returned to the Judges as aforesaid, that their parents, who so send them, may be punished according to law. Provided always, that this Canon shall not take away or derogate from any power or authority already given or established by any other Canon now in force.

" And all the said complaints or certificates shall be presented up to the Judges in their several circuits by the Bishop's Registrar, or some other of his deputies immediately after the publishing of his Majesty's commission, or at the end of the charge, which shall be then given by the Judge. And this upon pain of suspension for three months.

" This sacred Synod doth earnestly entreat the said Reverend Justices of Assize, to be careful in

the execution of the said laws committed to their trust, as they will answer to God for the daily increase of this gross kind of superstition. And further, we do also exhort all Judges, whether ecclesiastical or temporal upon the like account, that they would not admit in any of their courts any vexatious complaint, suit or suits, or presentments against any minister, churchwardens, questmen, sidemen, or other church-officers for the making of any such presentments.

" And lastly, we enjoin that every Bishop shall once in every year send into his Majesty's high court of Chancery, a *significavit* of the names and surnames of all such recusants who have stood excommunicated beyond the time limited by the law, and shall desire that the writ *De excommunicato capiendo* might be at once sent out against them all *ex officio*. And for the better execution of this decree, this present Synod doth most humbly beseech his most sacred Majesty, that the officers of the said high court of Chancery, whom it shall concern, may be commanded to send out the aforesaid writ from time to time as is desired, for that

it would much exhaust the particular estates of the Ordinaries, to sue out several writs at their own charge. And that the like command also may be laid upon the Sheriffs and their deputies, for the due and faithful execution of the said writs, as often as they shall be brought unto them.

" And to the end that this Canon may take the better and speedier effect, and not to be deluded or delayed; we further decree and ordain, that no popish recusant, who shall persist in the said sentence of excommunication beyond the time prescribed by law, shall be absolved by virtue of any appeal in any ecclesiastical court, unless the said party shall first in his or her own person, and not by a proctor, take the usual oath, *De parendo Juri, et standO mandatis Ecclesiæ.*"

From Canon V. Against Sectaries.

" Whereas there is a provision now made by a Canon for the suppressing of Popery, and the growth thereof, by subjecting all popish recusants

to the greatest severity of ecclesiastical censures in that behalf: this present Synod well knowing that there are other sects which endeavour the subversion both of the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England no less than Papists do, although by another way; for the preventing thereof, doth hereby decree and ordain, that all those proceedings and penalties which are mentioned in the aforesaid Canon against popish recusants as far as they shall be appliable, shall stand in full force and vigour against all Anabaptists, Brownists, Separatists, Familists, or other sect or sects, person or persons whatsoever, who do or shall either obstinately refuse, or ordinarily, not having a lawful impediment, (that is, for the space of a month,) neglect to repair to their parish-churches or chapels where they inhabit, for the hearing of divine service established, and receiving of the holy communion, according to law.

"And we do also further decree and ordain, that the clause contained in the Canon now made by this Synod against the books of Socinianism,

shall also extend to the makers, importers, printers and publishers, or dispersers of any book, writing, or scandalous pamphlet devised against the discipline and government of the Church of England, and unto the maintainers and abettors of any opinion or doctrine against the same.

" And further, because there are sprung up among us a sort of factious people, despisers and depravers of the Book of Common Prayer, who do not according to the law resort to their parish-church or chapel to join in the public prayers, service and worship of God with the congregation, contenting themselves with the hearing of sermons only, thinking thereby to avoid the penalties due to such as wholly absent themselves from the Church. We therefore for the restraint of all such wilful contemners or neglecters of the service of God, do ordain, that the church or chapel-wardens, and questmen, or sidemen of every parish, shall be careful to enquire out all such disaffected persons, and shall present the names of all delinquents at all Visitations of Bishops, and other Ordinaries; and that the same proceedings

and penalties mentioned in the Canon aforesaid respectively shall be used against them as against other recusants, unless within one whole month after they are first denounced, they shall make acknowledgment and reformation of that their fault. Provided always, that this Canon shall not derogate from any other canon, law, or statute in that behalf provided against those sectaries."

These Canons have been censured indeed by both Houses of Parliament, during the civil war; and they are expressly declared not to have the sanction of Parliament by a Clause in a Statute passed after the Restoration, cap. xii. anno 13 Car. II. §. 5. But the Church has never disavowed them, and they are thus still on a footing with her other Canons which have not received the sanction of Parliament, and therefore are not accounted part of the law of the land.

But they who charge on all the Roman Catholics of the present day the persecuting doctrines of the Council of Trent, are liable to another retort. In the Apology of Bishop Jewell there occurs the fol-

lowing passage. " Ex illo" (Verbo, scil. a Christo patefacto et ab Apostolis propagato) " nos solo omne genus veterum hæreticorum, quos isti nos aiunt ab inferis revocasse, condemnamus, et Arianos, Eutychianos, Marcionitas, Ebionæos, Valentinianos, Carpocratianos, Tatianos, Novatianos, eosque uno verbo omnes, qui vel de Deo Patre, vel de Christo, vel de Spiritu Sancto, vel de ullâ aliâ parte Religionis Christianæ impie senserunt, quia ab Evangelio Christi coarguuntur, impios et perditos pronuntiamus, et usque ad inferorum portas detestamur; *nec id solum, sed etiam si forte erumpant uspiam, et sese prodant, eos legitimis et civilibus suppliciis severi et sino coercemus.*" Now Jewell's Apology, to use the words of Bishop Randolph, " is said to have been published with the consent of the Bishops, and was always understood to speak the sense of the whole Church, in whose name it was written :" and this work expressly declares, and boasts that the Church of England, " severally and earnestly checks by secular and legal punishments," (and the term *suppliciis* is most naturally to be understood of capital punishments,) all who in her opinion hold

impious doctrines with regard to any point of the Christian religion. Nor is this all, for this very work of Jewell's containing this avowal of persecution was reprinted by Bishop Randolph in 1792, and again in 1812, amongst a Collection of Tracts, Catechisms, &c. whose express object was to convey the genuine sense of the Church of England. (See the Preface to the Enchiridion Theologicum, Oxford, 1812.) And yet should we not repel it as a calumny only excusable from the utter ignorance which it implied, if a Nestorian or Polish Socinian, unacquainted with the toleration actually enjoyed in England, and the actual sentiments of its members, were to assert that the Church of England is a persecuting Church, and thinks it her duty to burn all those whom she judges to be heretics?

The Catholics, it is true, are entangled by a difficulty which we do not feel, in their tenet of the infallibility of the Church. I call it an entanglement and a difficulty, for that is the true light in which to consider it. The tenet of the infallibility of

the Church does not really keep the Catholics in perpetual ignorance, but it embarrasses them in the expression of their sentiments, and gives Protestants a means of unfairly perplexing, and misrepresenting them. That is to say, that such being the tenet of the Church to which he belongs, an individual Catholic does not like directly to disavow it: his habitual respect for the Church makes him inclined generally to admit her infallibility; so that when he meets with particular decisions whose truth he cannot in his own mind allow, he would rather express his disbelief practically and indirectly, than by stating it directly permit himself to be charged with the conclusion, that then he must admit the Church to be fallible. It would be rather hard to tax the mathematicians of France and Italy with believing that the earth is the centre of the solar system; yet the Jesuits who edited Newton's Principia thought it right to declare in their Preface, that although in order to illustrate Newton's reasoning they were obliged to assume the truth of his premises, yet they did not mean to deny the doctrine of the Church, which had declared the earth to be immoveable. No one

is misled by such language in this instance: and if we dealt fairly with the Catholics we should in moral and political matters also believe their practice and the general tenor of their language, although they have not renounced, and perhaps would not renounce if called upon to do so, the general tenet of the Church with which their practice and sentiments may be inconsistent. We may call this if we will inconsistency or self deceit: but a similar state of mind is very common amongst those who are not Catholics; and it is certainly unjust either to tax them with consequences which they do not acknowledge, however legitimately drawn from their premises; or to represent them as insincere and unworthy of confidence in the ordinary duties and business of life, because in one of the most intricate parts of human duty they may not have traced their path clearly and boldly. I call it one of the most intricate parts of human duty, where a man is divided between his respect for the authority, and the inability of his reason to admit what that authority has declared: where he cannot practically agree, yet the public and direct expression of disagreement would break through ties which he holds

most sacred. In these circumstances, which are incident more or less to all men in their relations with societies, but most of all in their relations with their Church or religious society, it is perfectly easy to silence or perplex an adversary, but not so to convince him, and release him from his entanglement. If we wish really to remove a tenet which is certainly a great impediment to the improvement of the Roman Catholic Church, we must not appeal to it on every occasion as rendering improvement impossible and incredible: we must welcome and encourage every effort of individuals to release themselves from it, although they cannot distinctly disavow it without separating from a Church which they reverence; and the Church itself has no means of expressing its voice, since no General Council is likely to be ever again called together.

If I were writing politically I should hardly dwell longer on this part of the subject; but viewing the restoration of Catholics to their civil rights as opening, with God's blessing, the fairest prospect of their religious improvement, and considering that

the realizing or disappointment of this prospect will mainly depend upon the conduct of the Protestant clergy, I am anxious to combat the notion that the Roman Catholic religion is unchangeable and incurable, and that our business is only to try to gain individual converts from it, not to improve it by peaceful influence judiciously exerted. Now I believe that avowed proselytism will do very little in converting individuals, whilst it will irritate the bulk of the Roman Catholic Church, will keep alive a spirit of controversy always most unfavourable to the arriving at truth, and will confirm and aggravate those obnoxious tenets which we wish to do away with. On the contrary, our object should be to lead the Catholics first to alter practically the character of their religion by dwelling chiefly on those points which they hold as Christians, and avoiding as much as possible to draw their attention to their peculiar tenets as Roman Catholics. We should try to foster that state of mind so beautifully depicted in a little work equally pious and eloquent, in which the sincere Catholic priest, who dares not in his humility renounce the communion of his Church, is repre-

sented as converted from its errors to all purposes of his soul's salvation by sinking all minor points, and dwelling entirely on the love of Christ. We should study the gradual progress of the corruptions of Popery, and observe how large a portion of them grew out of the common superstition and common vices of human nature, deepening with the deeper ignorance of the times, and likely to be first softened and finally dispelled with the progressive brightening of Christian light. We should direct our particular attention to the band which has united these into one mass, and thus gave them a greater than their natural power of evil, a longer than their natural term of existence. Then we should see that this band, I mean the doctrines of the authority of the Church, and of the Papal supremacy, was first formed by honest ignorance upon principles whose falsehood we have ourselves yet hardly discovered, was then strengthened by men of great ability and lofty views as a powerful means of counteracting the violences and abuses of the times; and was lastly maintained as an instrument of the lowest covetousness and ambition, and was thus wearing its most odious

form when it was first exposed to a general attack. The attack of the Reformation was thus vehement, for the evil which it assailed was monstrous: but this vehemence excited the angry passions to defend what the baser passions had before maintained from interest, and frightened the humble and the ignorant by denouncing as a mass of iniquity what to them amidst all its evils had still imparted some drops of the water of life. Those in authority insisted that the system was one and indivisible, because the tainted part which would otherwise have been instantly cut out was that which they most desired to keep: those who were engaged in the controversy as usual lost sight of truth in their ardour for victory, and defended error because their opponents had attacked it; while the ignorant shrunk from the sin of heresy, and trembled at the thought of abandoning the Catholic Church of Christ. The reformers on the other hand shared on many points the mistaken views of their adversaries, and therefore combated them unskilfully. What was a departure from Christian unity, what was the Church of Christ, and how its relations with corrupt forms of civil government had ren-

dered the language of the New Testament in some respects inapplicable now, were questions which in the sixteenth century men were too recently awakened from a long sleep of ignorance to be able to answer. To these must be added the evils occasioned by a misunderstanding of the nature and uses of the Old Testament; and the perpetual reference to the Jewish covenant as an authority for institutions and practices among Christians. Hence the cry of idolatry so loudly raised against the Church of Rome, and the bitter intolerance with which its worship and its members were regarded. Meantime national and political animosities mingled themselves with the religious dissension, and the breach between Catholics and Protestants became decided throughout Europe. A period of peace succeeded, of external peace, but with no approximations towards union. Other objects occupied the chief place in the attention of mankind; commerce was greatly extended; the useful arts, the physical sciences, and all the branches of general literature, were assiduously cultivated. Men's minds were engrossed with the present, forgetful of its indissoluble connection

existed, but were directed to other objects. The work still remains to be done, to apply the full lights of modern knowledge to the true developement of the principles of the Gospel as applicable to man in a state of civil society; and thus and thus only will Protestants and Catholics be brought to a true Christian union; retaining if they will their separate social existence, but cooperating cordially in their one great work, to prepare themselves by establishing God's kingdom on earth for the everlasting enjoyment of it in heaven.

Then the very corner stone of Roman Catholic intolerance, the opinion that there is no salvation out of the pale of the Church, may be stripped of all its mischief, and reduced to the simple expression of a great Scriptural truth, that God's covenanted mercies can only be promised to such as are within the covenant; that in the ark of Christ's Church alone is certain safety, and without it all is a dark wilderness of doubt and danger. The evil of the proposition has arisèn from the false opinion that Christ's redeemed people must all form one separate ecclesiastical society, when we know that God's

created people are not required to form one separate civil society. Had the countries in which Christianity was first preached been as now politically unconnected with each other, the confusion never would have arisen: for then the Christians in one nation must have formed a society avowedly distinct from those in another. Spiritually indeed they would have been one society, inasmuch as they would have had the same divine Head, the same indwelling Spirit, the same hope, and the same God; but xternally they would have been perfectly indendent, and competent like all other societies form their own rules and appoint their own ers. But the first Christians being accidentally bers of the same political society, naturally ed themselves as forming also only one eccle- society: and as their civil sovereign resided , so they looked to the same place for their cal head; just as the branch religious our several counties are subordinate to id supreme society in London. That vays happened soon comes to be con- cessary; and therefore because the point of fact been one society, it

was declared that it essentially and necessarily was so: because the head of the central society at Rome was naturally the head of all the provincial societies, it was made out that his supremacy was not accidental and temporary, but necessary and perpetual. But a perpetual and necessary head of the Church was certainly Christ's vicar: and for so great an office it might well be supposed that an extraordinary portion of Christ's Spirit would be vouchsafed to him. The conclusion indeed was reasonable, and had Christ's servants been designed to form of necessity one society, had it been their Lord's pleasure, that that should be without the common right of all other societies, the right of self-government, and be of necessity subject to one head, it is probable that this head would have been clearly marked out for his office by possessing superior gifts and graces, just as men are thus clearly marked out for authority over children, and dominion over the brute creation. And therefore the fact, that the bishops of Rome have not possessed this perpetual superiority of goodness and wisdom, renders it probable that they were not designed to be the perpetual heads of the Church, and that Christians as

such possess the same rights of self-government in ecclesiastical society, which they enjoy as men in civil society. Now Protestants have seen and allowed all this as far as the supremacy of the Pope is concerned, but by retaining themselves a portion of the original error of Popery they have found it more difficult to combat the conclusions which that error gave rise to. They shared the error of the Catholics in supposing that the Church must be one society in a sense differing from that in which all mankind are one society; and therefore in order to acquit themselves of what they called the sin of schism, in separating from the Church, they charged that Church with idolatry, that they might represent it as a greater sin to remain in communion with it. Whereas had they remembered that the members of one nation are connected as Christians with the members of another nation only in the same way that they are connected with them as men; redeemed and sanctified by the same God, as the same God also created them; with the same spiritual, as they have the same natural faculties; and aiming at one common perfection of the former as they do of the latter; with one common law of

reason binding them as men, and one common law of the Spirit binding them as Christians, but left equally as Christians and as men to form their own municipal or particular laws, and to determine that form of government by which they may respectively judge their common objects most likely to be obtained in their own case, independence would have implied no schism, nor would they have sought to aggravate the errors of their neighbours in order to make out a just ground of quarrel, when their forming themselves into a distinct society was no breach of charity, and should have been considered as no quarrel at all.

The Roman Catholics then are right in maintaining, that out of Christ's Church there is no covenanted salvation: but they are wrong, and many Protestants share in their error, in mistaking the accidental state of the Church at its first origin for something essential to its nature: as if, because it was one society then in the strictest sense of the term, it must be in some other than a spiritual sense one society now. In that spiritual sense indeed it is ever one: but in that sense all are

members of it, to how many soever subordinate forms of Christian society they may respectively belong, so long as they acknowledge the same Maker and Saviour and Sanctifier, so long as they are one with each other, not in forms and regulations, but in principle and in spirit, in the Father and in the Son. And therefore when sincere Protestants[f] would acknowledge as members of the Catholic Church of Christ those societies of Christians only which are governed by Bishops, on the ground that amongst them alone the apostolical succession is preserved, there appears a misapprehension of the true nature of a spiritual society, and a participation in the same erroneous views which have led the Romanists to exclude from *their* sense of the Catholic Church all who will not acknowledge the succession of the Popes from St. Peter the chief of the apostles.

[f] I allude to a Sermon published two or three years since by the Rev. Walter Hook, of Christ Church, Oxford. I have the less scruple in mentioning his name, as I know him to be a sincere and zealous minister of Christ; and my belief that his views on one point are erroneous, does not interfere with my high respect for his character.

The principle which we should follow in our endeavours to purify the Roman Catholic religion might be exemplified in numerous other instances: but it will better suit my present limits if I state once more what it is, and shew the bearing of what I have last written upon my general subject. The principle is this; that we should trace the errors of the Catholics to their origin, and should thus perceive how much of them is mere corruption, that is, error introduced for an interested or ambitious purpose; how much arises from ignorance or misconception, and what the misconception was; and, above all, how much of truth is mixed with the error, and may be extracted from it by a careful and delicate analysis. In doing this we should also observe how far Protestants have either condemned the whole of a tenet of the Romish Church without discrimination, or themselves retain the original error which gave birth to it, and therefore contend against it on wrong grounds. We should consider that our true object is not to convert Catholics to Protestantism, but to perfect their views and our own to the full wisdom and holiness of Christianity, although we may each remain distinct.

societies, and retain different rites and internal regulations. We should substitute inquiry for controversy; not wishing to bring them over to our side, but that both they and we should be on the side of truth, renouncing our errors, and clearing our views when indistinct and imperfect. "Whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing:" that is to say, while aspiring to more perfect knowledge, let not those who are more advanced despise their more backward brethren, but let both walk in the same rule of Christian holiness, and with the same spirit of Christian charity.

And for the application of all this to the great Question which now engrosses the whole mind of England; I wish to impress upon the Christian opponents of concession, that while I maintain the positive duty of granting the Catholic claims as an act of simple justice, it is also with the most deliberate conviction, that thus and thus only can the spiritual improvement of our Catholic countrymen ever be effected. If Protestants will not endure

to hear the language of impartiality and charity towards the Catholics, if they will only look upon them as men without truth, and without humanity, as ferocious bigots and blasphemous idolaters, do they think that the Catholics can be more favourably disposed to them, when over and above their religious prejudices they must entertain against them the galling sense of national and civil injustice? What Protestant missionary, however holy and eloquent, can have any chance of influencing men, who are not only daily reviled by Protestants, but actually degraded and oppressed by them; are treated as aliens in their own land, as unfit and unworthy to become citizens of their own country? They who are most zealous in their endeavours to convert the slaves in the West Indies to Christianity, are also most eager to effect their temporal deliverance: they are regarded therefore as friends, and the Gospel is doubly loved for the sake of those who offer the knowledge of it. Would the negroes listen to a mission of tyrannical overseers, who spoke to them with the whip in one hand and the Bible in the other; or to a set of plantation

proprietors, who had most steadily refused to adopt every measure recommended by the government of Britain for the improvement of their temporal condition? We have a great, a solemn duty to perform towards our Irish brethren; we have connected them with ourselves, and therefore we are bound first to do them justice, and then to do them kindness: to labour at this eleventh hour to atone for the long day during which we have not only neglected to do them good, but have heaped upon them evil alike physical and moral.

The great numerical majority of the clergy of England are united against doing an act of Christian justice, and Christian wisdom: and they tax their opponents with acting upon worldly views, and sacrificing their religion to political expediency. I will not retort by impugning the motives of those who think differently from me, nor by depreciating their understandings. I know that there are amongst them men who are not to be surpassed in holiness of life, or in vigour of natural abilities. But what they do want, and I speak it neither

reproachfully nor insultingly, is acquired knowledge and impartiality. It is notorious that a large portion of them abstain habitually upon principle from the study of politics; and how can they possibly understand what they have refused to learn? And what is the ordinary education of a clergyman? The history of his own country, except in a mere abridgment, forms no part of his necessary studies either at School or at the University; still less does it generally occupy his attention when he begins to prepare himself for his own profession. Many persons certainly read much more than they are compelled to do; but not the majority; and in point of fact I should not underrate the historical knowledge of the mass of the clergy, if I supposed them to have read Hume, perhaps with Smollett's Continuation, Clarendon, and Burnet's History of the Reformation. Of the Laws and of the progress of our Constitution of England they know but little; and of the history of the other nations of Europe, their knowledge is commonly still more limited. The *impressions* which they gain from the writers I have mentioned, for with the mass of readers the tone

of an author's sentiments leaves a much deeper impression than his detail of facts, are all in favour of Toryism, or against the Catholics; and these in the present state of affairs belong to the same party, and lead to the same political conduct. Their professional studies tend to produce the same bias: their making the thirty-nine Articles the text book for a large portion of their theological reading, accustoms them to look at religion controversially; they learn what are the arguments by which the Catholics are to be combated; and the obnoxious tenets of the Romish Church are brought before their eyes in their most offensive form, while the good parts of the system, and the causes which led to its errors, and which, although they do not make them less errors, yet would often moderate our dislike and suspicion of those who held them, are not presented to them. With this previous education, if they travel for a short time [g] on the

[g] A longer residence abroad might perhaps lead to a different result. I was told two years ago by an English Clergyman who has resided at Rome since the year 1814, that he settled there with a strong impression against the Roman Catholic religion,

continent of Europe, and particularly if they visit Italy, they return home with prejudices increased and ignorance unenlightened. With little knowledge of the history and literature of the countries they travel through, and with few personal acquaintances among the people to soften their feelings towards them, they catch directly at those gross exhibitions of superstition which are so com-

and against granting the claims of the Catholics of Ireland: that his sense of the evils and errors of the Catholic religion had become continually stronger and stronger; but his opinion with regard to the Catholic Question was wholly changed; and he was satisfied that there was no prospect of relieving Ireland from its superstitions but by granting to the Catholics their civil rights, and so alienating them from their dependence on Rome by uniting them on equal terms to their Protestant countrymen.

In confirmation of this view of the subject, I know that some of the principal members of the Papal Government, in conversation with an individual totally unconnected with England, have expressed their apprehensions lest the Catholic claims should be granted; as the influence actually enjoyed by the Pope in Ireland would then be superseded in the minds of the Irish by natural feelings of attachment to their country and constitution.

mon, and think that they have now a confirmation of all their former notions of the monstrous nature of Popery.

On their return home they settle mostly in country parishes, and the little time which they can spare from their pastoral duties for pursuing their own studies, is naturally devoted to works on divinity. In this state of mind and with this previous education, the Catholic Question presents itself to their notice: a question involving at once the first principles of civil society; and requiring a copious knowledge of the history of the Christian Church, of the constitution and parties of England, and of the history and institutions of several of the nations of the continent. They who have never considered great political questions, nor have examined the origin of civil society, and the rights and duties of individuals as members of it, cannot appreciate the sin of that flagrant injustice which we have offered to the Catholics of Ireland. They who know not the history of the Christian Church, are ignorant of the causes which led successively to the growth of Popery, and know not the proba-

bility of its improvement, if its nature be thoroughly understood, and a suitable plan of dealing with it be devised. They who have never studied the contests of our parties, and the vicissitudes of our government, are not aware that in their sense of the term we have no constitution at all; that we have no code in which the principles of our government were at once fully laid down, and the whole social edifice constructed according to them; but that what we call our constitution is a state of things resulting from various successive struggles, each of which had its own particular object, and led to its own particular reform. Thus the struggle which ended at the Revolution of 1688, was substantially and in principle, whether the crown or the nation as represented in Parliament should possess the effective control of our government; and all the enactments against Catholics were merely accidental, and arose partly out of the circumstance that the popular party in the last two reigns had consisted chiefly of Puritans; partly because persecution of Popery was the only point in which the Tories could sympatihze with the Whigs; and they were glad by their zeal against

the Catholics to compensate for their long oppression of the Protestant Dissenters; and partly because the great reliance of the two last Stuart princes was on the support of the Catholic despotism of France. But so little are the principles of Roman Catholics necessarily adverse to civil liberty, that had the quarrels between the Guelfs and Ghibelines lasted for three centuries longer, we should have seen the Pope supporting and supported by the free Republics of Italy in a contest against the Protestant tyranny and high monarchical doctrines of the emperors of Germany. They who know the Roman Catholic religion only from the naked statement of its worst tenets as exhibited in the works of Protestant controversialists, and are ignorant of what it is and has been in practice for the last hundred and fifty years wherever it has been placed in peaceful contact with Protestantism, judge of it naturally from the tendency of its most offensive principles, supposing that all men will carry their principles into practice, and ignorant of the checks and palliatives which in actual life neutralize their virulence. Not feeling therefore the sin of national injustice, not understanding the nature of

Catholicism, not acquainted with our parties and their struggles, not familiar with the actual state of the Catholic Religion in other countries, they act upon one impression only, which their education and professional studies have alike fostered, that Popery is an unchristian thing, and that nothing should be done to favour it. Influenced by this impression themselves they impart it to their parishioners, whose ignorance is more complete, and their passions more violent; and thus a clamour is raised, powerful from the numbers that join in it, and respectable from the honesty of their motives; but worth nothing in determining the merits of the Question, as the knowledge of those who raise it is so little proportioned to their zeal. I know that it savours of arrogance to claim a superiority of knowledge over those who differ from us; and the carvers among the lions would no doubt represent the matter differently. Yet the statement which I have given of the ordinary education and studies of the most active class of our opponents is one which they themselves cannot deny; nor can it be denied, on the other hand, that all those statesmen who have most considered the

Question, and whose means of information have been the fullest, have, with an unanimity unparalleled on any other public measure, agreed in their judgment, that the claims of the Catholics should be granted. The accession of the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel to this distinguished band has given to the argument from authority a force which admits of no further increase. The leading Ministers of the country, who had for many years opposed concession, have exposed themselves, without any conceivable motive but the conscientious conviction of fuller knowledge, to all the vulgar odium which attaches to every change of opinion, and have offended a powerful party, whose devoted attachment they had hitherto possessed, in order to add their voice to the consenting wisdom of all our other great statesmen, and to declare that the claims of the Catholics should be opposed no longer. Here then we find the warmest opponents of the Catholics to be men whose political knowledge is from education and profession greatly defective; while on the other hand those who have united the greatest natural abilities with the fullest information are unanimous in advocating their cause. And if it be urged

that it is a religious question rather than a political one, and that on points of religion no authority can be superior to that of the clergy, I will answer, that this argument is either false or inapplicable. It is false that it is a religious question, in that only sense in which the clergy could be the best judges of it; namely, if the point at issue were whether the doctrines of the Catholic or the Protestant Church were most agreeable to Scripture. A religious question indeed it is in another sense, inasmuch as every question of practice concerns our religious duty to God, and every act of injustice, every stumbling-block that is thrown in the way of our neighbour's spiritual improvement, is a sin for which we must answer at God's judgment seat. But in the discernment of our duties as members of civil societies, the clergy assuredly are not the best judges; because the origin, rights, and successive revolutions of civil societies they avowedly neglect to study.

In the foregoing pages I have endeavoured to treat the Question as a religious one; to urge the granting of the Catholic claims as in itself a neces-

sary act of Christian justice, and as the only means by which we may be enabled to perform to our Irish brethren hereafter our bounden duty of Christian charity, in advancing their physical, moral, and spiritual good. I have never forgotten that I am a Christian minister myself, and that those whose attention to my arguments I most wish to gain, are Christian ministers also. Earnestly, solemnly, would I entreat them to believe, that my love for our common faith is not less than theirs, and my desire to promote the kingdom of our common Master not less sincere: that the principles which I have maintained I believe to be those of Christ's Gospel, and that certainly the more often and attentively I have studied that Gospel, I have been the more fully satisfied of their truth.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the foregoing pages were written, I have been informed that some Letters written by Mr. Faber, and published in the St. James's Chronicle, are considered by many persons to contain arguments against concession to the Catholics, which on religious grounds are unanswerable. I had seen the second of these Letters before, and it had not seemed to me to deserve any particular attention; I was besides unwilling to enter into controversy with an individual, for whose character as a Christian I had been accustomed to feel much respect. But as others, it appears, judge differently of Mr. Faber's reasoning, I would request their candid attention to the following attempt to reply to it.

Mr. Faber's views of the Catholic Question and mine differ at the very outset. He throws aside the argument from right as "a palpable folly," "because no individual possesses any abstract right

to the possession of political power." And having thus decided that no man can urge concession to the Catholic claims as a point of duty, he considers that it can only be defended by arguments drawn from expediency, and from terror; meaning by expediency that same motive which is in private life called self interest; and by terror, the feeling that weakly shrinks from difficulty and danger. He thus denies that any man can advocate the Catholic claims on the grounds of Christian principle, and using the terms "expediency and terror" in a sense which makes them synonymous with two of the very basest of human motives, he fastens a severe and uncandid imputation upon those who differ from him.

I on the contrary maintain, that the argument from right is perfectly decisive of the whole Question; because nations, and societies of men large and varied enough in their elements to form distinct nations, have an eternal right to possess political power over themselves; and if they unite with other societies, it follows that as each when separate had a right to the *whole* government of *itself*, so each when united has a right to *a share* of the government of *itself and its associate.*

I further maintain, that the argument from charity, or a regard to the general welfare of the

society to which we belong, is no less decisive than the argument from right: that the welfare of this whole nation both temporal and spiritual will be highly advanced by the removal of a perpetual cause of discord between two important parts of it, and the consequent growth of "peace and happiness, religion and piety," as the natural fruits of an act founded on "truth and justice." And this argument from charity is in all national questions of internal policy another name for the argument from expediency. For where no foreign nation is concerned, the welfare of his country, or what is most expedient for the good of that country, is to a statesman precisely the object which as a member of it he is most bound to promote; and to aim at which is not selfishness, but comprehensive charity.

I maintain thirdly, that the dread of occasioning physical and moral evil to others, especially when we ourselves shall partake perhaps of the moral evil, but are not likely to be affected by the physical, is a most honourable and Christian terror; and that he who is without it is in a degraded state both intellectually and morally. And the terror of provoking a civil war in Ireland, the terror of sweeping slaughter, conflagration, massacres, and executions; the terror of letting loose without restraint all the worst passions of human nature, while they them-

selves would be living in peace, and would be certain of political victory without incurring any personal risk or suffering, this is the terror which the legislators and ministers of England are reproached with, as if it were no other than the low and unworthy fear which shrinks from danger.

So much then for what Mr. Faber calls "the palpable folly" of the argument from right; and so much for his assertion that "the argument from expediency involves in its very nature a total disregard to moral honesty, if such moral honesty stand in the way of fancied convenience:" and "the argument from terror avowedly reposes on a disgraceful confession of the most degrading moral cowardice."

But having thus disposed of these arguments *for* concession, he proceeds to bring forward what he considers a decisive argument *against* it; namely, the argument from "religious responsibility." Of this, he says, he has never heard the slightest mention; but, on the contrary, "he has sometimes noted the objection that the question is purely political, and that it has no concern with religion." Now I agree so far with Mr. Faber, that I think we do hear too little "mention of our religious responsibility;" that is, that we are not enough accustomed to consider ourselves responsible to God

for all our actions whether in private life or in public: and liable to his judgment alike for national and political as for individual injustice, when we make it our own act by instigating it, or trying to prevent its removal. In this sense therefore I think that the Catholic Question has a great deal to do with religion. But if those who say that it has no concern with religion mean, as Mr. Faber must know that they do mean, that in doing justice to our neighbour the consideration of his religious belief is wholly foreign to the question; and that a judge who were to make a lawsuit between a Catholic and a Protestant a religious question in Mr. Faber's sense of the term, and were to regard not the merits of the case but the religious belief of the parties, would not be more "religiously responsible" for his unjust judgment, than the government which should decide a dispute between a Catholic and a Protestant people on these same grounds, then they mean no more than is perfectly true, and Mr. Faber has said nothing that can shake their statement.

Let us see however what his arguments *against* concession from "religious responsibility" is built upon. The Members of both Houses of Parliament before they take their seats make an oath, in which is contained the following clause. "I do believe that the invocation or adoration of the Virgin

Mary, or any other saint, and the sacrifice of the Mass, as they are now used in the Church of Rome, are *superstitious and idolatrous.*" Therefore, says Mr. Faber, every Member of both Houses has sworn that he believes Popery to be idolatry: and to vote therefore "for a national union with the Romanists" is to vote "for a national union with those whom he has declared to be idolaters;" that is to say, it is to vote "for the perfect engraftation of idolatry" upon what Mr. Faber and others "have fondly deemed their exclusively Protestant constitution." And in order to extend this argument to those who are not members of the Legislature, he reminds all persons who have subscribed to the thirty-nine Articles, that is, all the clergy and all graduates at both Universities, that "our national Church in her accredited Homilies (Homilies recognized in her Articles) has pronounced Popery to be idolatry."

I believe I have stated Mr. Faber's argument fully and fairly. Now although I have subscribed the Articles, in which the Homilies are recognized, yet I do not feel myself at all bound to think or to call the Roman Catholic religion "idolatry," in Mr. Faber's meaning of the term; nor should I feel myself bound to do so, if I had taken the oath imposed on all Members of Parliament. And if I did believe that popery was idolatry, I should no less think that

concession to the claims of the Roman Catholics of Ireland was in our circumstances a positive Christian duty. These several statements I am now to endeavour to justify.

I have subscribed to the thirty-fifth Article of the Church of England, which declares, that "the second book of Homilies doth contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, and necessary for *these* times, as doth the former book of Homilies:" "and therefore," it proceeds, "we judge them to be read in churches by the ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understanded of the people." In saying that a book "doth contain a godly and wholesome doctrine," do I pledge myself to maintain the justice of the exact degree of condemnation which it attaches to those who hold the opposite doctrine? nay, do I even pledge my assent to all the doctrine which it may itself contain? The Homilies do "contain a godly and Christian doctrine," for they contain the doctrines of the Gospel, and their predominant character is according to that Gospel. But may these doctrines never be stated with some exaggeration, and may they not be accompanied with too fierce a tone of condemnation against those who differ from them? Jewell's Apology contains a "godly and Christian doctrine," but do I by saying this pledge my approbation or assent to that passage which I have already

extracted, page 80, in which he declares that the Church of England detests all whom it considers heretics to the gates of hell, and punishes them by the secular arm wherever it can find them? Nay, with regard to the Homilies, I conceive, that the omission of the Bishops for many years past to enforce "the diligent reading of them in the churches" expresses their belief as well as that of the majority of the clergy, that although they were necessary for the times to which the epithet "*these*" was applicable when the Article was written, yet that the word "*these*" has not a perpetually varying application, so as to signify all times from the sixteenth century downwards. And for those who extol the Revolution of 1688 with a claim of such exclusive attachment to it, do they conceive themselves bound to admit all the doctrines of the "Homily against Rebellion?"

"But the Members of both Houses of Parliament have sworn that they believe popery to be idolatry." They have sworn no such thing, but simply, "that the invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other saint, and the sacrifice of the Mass, as they are now used in the Church of Rome, are superstitious and idolatrous." The *adoration* of any creature, that is to say, the putting any created being in the place of God, and worshipping him as the Author of spiritual good, would certainly be

idolatry; but this adoration the Roman Catholic Church disclaims as earnestly as we do. "D. Peut on adorer les anges et les saints? R. Non, on ne peut adorer que Dieu seul; mais nous honorons et nous invoquons les anges et les saints comme les amis et les serviteurs de Dieu. D. Adorons nous les Tres-Sainte Vierge? R. Non, il n'est pas plus permis d'adorer la Tres-Sainte Vierge que les autres saints; mais nous l'honorons d'une maniere plus particuliere que les saints et les anges." *Catechisme imprimé par Ordre de son Excellence Monseigneur L'Archevêque de Rheims, pour l'usage de son Diocèse. Rheims*, 1822. *p.* 112, 113. The *invocation* of creatures after they have departed from this world and no longer stand to us in any human relation is so apt to border upon worship, and as it is now used in the more ignorant Roman Catholic countries, so often becomes worship, that it may justly be termed *in practice*, that is, *as it is now used in the Church of Rome*, superstitious and idolatrous. In practice it is idolatrous: but does it therefore follow that the whole Roman Catholic religion is to be branded as idolatry, that is, as an apostasy from the worship of God and the substitution of some creature or creatures in the place of God, because one of its doctrines is superstitious and of dangerous consequence, and leads amongst the ignorant to idolatrous practice, not necessarily or designedly, but from its exceeding liability to abuse? If Popery

be idolatry, it is not a true religion grievously corrupted, but a false religion altogether: nay it is worse than Mohammedanism, for even Mohammedans worship one eternal, invisible, and spiritual God, the Maker and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. Now if this has been the language of some individuals in the Church of England, it has certainly not been the general sense of her members: they have held that the Church of Rome was a true Church, although grievously corrupted; that the Church of Rome "has erred," to use the language of the nineteenth Article, "in matters of faith," like the Churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch; but that it has not therefore wholly forfeited the character of a Christian Church, any more than they. I need hardly remind my readers of the sentiments of Hooker, which exposed him indeed to the censures of the Puritans of those days, that the Church of Rome is a Christian Church, and holds the foundation of Christian faith, although some of her doctrines deny that foundation by consequence. Such in my judgment is the true construction of the clause in the oath taken by members of the Legislature; they swear that they believe one of her doctrines to be in practice idolatrous, not that her whole system is idolatry.

But now admitting for the sake of argument that Popery is idolatry in Mr. Faber's sense of the

term, still his conclusion, that the Catholic claims cannot be granted without sin, would not follow from this admission. Indeed the conclusion in his two first Letters is throughout assumed, without even an attempt to prove it; and it is only in his third Letter, when some friend had reminded him of this omission, that he endeavours to make out his case. He first of all appeals to the Old Testament, "in which an union of *any* description with idolatry is clearly forbidden to the Israelites, on the broad and general ground, that such union would infallibly seduce the people into the practices of their associates;" and "the ground of this prohibition," he thinks, "is of universal application;" but as "it may be captiously said" that the case of the Israelites is peculiar, he forbears to press this argument, and "turns forthwith to the New Testament."

If I wished to avoid replying to any part of Mr. Faber's statement, I might content myself with observing, that the argument from the Old Testament is one which he does not himself press, although he still asserts that "it is of universal application." But his admirers will perhaps believe his assertion, although he does not urge the proof of it; and if they are candid, I ought not to leave them in error without attempting to lead them out of it. Now amongst the Jews, idol-

latry was a capital crime; and every one who was guilty of it was forthwith to be put to death. This was also ordered on the general principle, lest the Israelites should be seduced by evil example. Would Mr. Faber recommend this method of settling the Catholic Question, by a general massacre of all those whom he calls idolaters, after the example of Elijah and Jehu? The Israelites were told that the practice of idolatrous rites defiled the land, and union therefore was out of the question with those who were not even allowed to live. So that on this principle we should renew the scenes of 1780; burn all the Roman Catholic Chapels, and do as the mob then gladly would have done, put to death those who worship in them. We are already polluted, according to the Jewish law; and if I may without seeming irreverence state the conclusions to which Mr. Faber's reasoning leads, the curse of God can only be avoided by the perpetration of the most atrocious acts of persecution and murder.

The truth is, that the principles of the Old Testament are eternal, but the application of them wholly different under the Jewish and under the Christian dispensation. When we read the 109th Psalm in our Service, the application of the wishes of evil there contained must be wholly spiritual, otherwise our very prayer will be turned into sin.

Our "enemies" (v. 19.) are sin and Satan: for men however sinful are not to be so regarded by us, till Christ the Saviour shall come as Christ the Judge. Till that great day the most wicked man alive is our brother; and for him as well as for us Christ has died. Christians indeed when formed into commonwealths may use the sword as the ministers of God's moral government; that is, they may punish crimes against society which heathen governments may punish also: for the sword is committed to them not as Christians but as men. But Christ's spiritual government has no sword, and the arms which they may use as Christians are wholly spiritual. And as idolatry is a spiritual crime, it may be opposed by us only with spiritual weapons; the penalties and restraints which we may use as men against moral offenders, we may not apply as Christians against spiritual offenders without presumption. "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save."

I must now follow Mr. Faber to his argument from the New Testament: which is grounded, as one might have supposed, on the command in the Revelation to flee out of Babylon. Here he first assumes that Babylon means "a principle *or* a community manifestly idolatrous," that is, idolatrous in the literal sense, as worshipping others

than God. Now in order to fix the interpretation of the commandment to "come out of Babylon," it makes some difference whether Babylon signifies a principle *or* a community; because if it means the former, the "coming out of her" must signify "*withdrawing ourselves from idolatrous principles:*" a duty certainly which no Christian ever disputed. But let it signify a community, and let the "coming out" be taken as a command to have no intercourse with such a community, because, as Mr. Faber says, "no penal plague or excision can descend upon the heads of the idolaters, which must not inevitably descend also upon the heads of the non-idolaters, their closely intimate and voluntary associates." That is, when idolaters and non-idolaters live in the same country, the visitations of war, pestilence, and famine, cannot fall on the one without involving the other in their suffering. The conclusion from which is, that we should either separate locally from the Roman Catholics, or make them separate from us. Does Mr. Faber mean to recommend that we should migrate to America, or that we should adopt the milder alternative of the curse of Cromwell, and shut up all the English and Irish Catholics together in Connaught? Or, to speak seriously, does he forget that we are nationally and politically associated with these idolaters already? that the Irish Catholics are already our

countrymen, that they serve in our armies, man our fleets, practise in our courts of law, and pay taxes to our government? On his principle we should instantly banish them from amongst us: their presence must entail defeat on our armies, and shipwreck on our fleets; and their money certainly must be an accursed thing, which will bring down a judgment on us if we receive it. If this be his meaning, it would at least be honest. But to receive benefits from the society of idolaters, and yet to exclaim against the pollution of it; to get all we can from living with them, and only scruple about giving them any thing in return; is something like the piety of Saul, who destroyed utterly all that was vile and refuse of the spoil of the Amalekites, but spared the best of the oxen, and of the sheep, to sacrifice unto the Lord his God in Gilgal,—to keep up Protestant ascendancy.

Such are my answers to Mr. Faber's premises and his conclusion, so far indeed as I can make out what his conclusion is meant to be. My conclusion also shall be grounded on a precept in the New Testament, which on the supposition that Catholics were idolaters, would be more to the purpose than the quotation about coming out of Babylon. We are united actually in civil society

with Catholics, and the question is, how we are to deal with them? Now St. Paul directs, that where Christians were married to unbelievers, that is, to idolaters, the Christian husband or wife should not propose to quit his or her unbelieving partner. "What knowest thou," is his truly Christian question, "whether thou shalt save thy wife or thy husband?" whether if you continue to live on affectionately with them, you may not be the means of converting them. But the parties thus continuing to live together, the terms of their union were settled not by their religious faith, but on principles of civil and social justice. The heathen husband must have had authority over his Christian wife, and must have had the supreme control over the education of his children; because natural and civil law declared that such were his rights as a man and as a citizen. So also should we be anxious to live on in peace with the Irish Catholics, as we are actually their countrymen. But this being so, our respective political rights must be decided on the universal principles of social and political justice, and not from the spiritual superiority which one party may possess over the other. Religion is not injured by our giving idolaters their rights as men and as citizens, but by our forgetting our own duty in either joining with them spiritually, or oppressing them politically.

I had purposed to make some comment upon the tone of Mr. Faber's Letters, and on the assumption which runs through them, that the advocates of concession to the Catholics are men who care little for religion. But instead of doing so, I have thought it better to look over my own answer, and carefully to erase every thing which might appear to be unkind or insulting in tone and expression there. Evil passions are never more apt to arise within us than when we are engaged in what we sincerely believe to be our duty; it shews strongly our corrupted nature, that it is so hard to keep our motives and feelings pure even when our work is a good one.

Mr. Faber's opinions I think to be erroneous and mischievous; and as such I have done my best to answer him. Whatever he may think of the force of the answer, I trust that he will allow my sentiments to be as consistent with a sincere affection for Christianity as his own: and that a man may advocate the Catholic claims with other arguments than those founded on his interests or his fears.

THE END.

BAXTER, PRINTER, OXFORD.